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REVIEW
OF
THE CONTROVERSY
ON
NATIONAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND,
REVIVED BY THE REV. H. WOODWARD'S
"THOUGHTS ON THE POINTS AT ISSUE
BETWEEN THE
ESTABLISHED CHURCH, AND THE NATIONAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION."

BY THE
REV. J. M. HIFFERNAN, A.M.
RECTOR OF ST. JOHN'S, NEWPORT, IN THE DIOCESE OF CASHEL.

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1844.

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REVIEW OF THE CONTROVERSY,

&c.

AS ALL who have lately addressed themselves to the subject, deemed it right to offer some apology for intermeddling with "the Points at issue between the Established Church and the National Board of Education in Ireland," I may be permitted so far to imitate them, as to give a very brief history of the subjoined "Review of the Controversy on National Education," which Mr. Woodward's pamphlet has revived.

When Mr. Ryland's "Observations" appeared, I noticed among them sundry misconceptions, and consequent mis-statements, of which I thought it most desirable that the public mind should be disabused; and finding that no person came forward to do this, I threw together a few "brief remarks" on his and Mr. Woodward's pamphlet. These I was about to forward to a periodical, when the "Christian Examiner" for July, and the pamphlet entitled "Second Thoughts" reached me, and furnished additional matter for comment, and additional grounds for asserting the soundness of Mr. Woodward's views, in the discrepancy of the views of his opponents. "Second Thoughts" had expanded my "brief remarks" into a review, not only of the pamphlets, but of the general question. Mr. Ross's "Facts and Reasons," which subsequently reached

me, swelled them into a pamphlet. When about to send that pamphlet to press, I happened to learn (for I received no copy) that some of the Clergy of his diocese had issued a circular, under the sanction of their names, asking for signatures to a protest against the views expressed in Mr. Woodward's pamphlet; and I conceived that it would be more respectful, as well as satisfactory, to await the publication of such a document, to which all would naturally look as embodying the collective wisdom and argument of the diocese on this important question. That document, subscribed by considerably less than one half of the beneficed Clergy, but considerably more than it would have contained had the document been regularly submitted to the diocese, has just appeared in the Ecclesiastical Journal, and Christian Examiner, but throws no light, indeed offers no opinion, on "the points at issue." If the subscribers continue to disapprove, or now disapprove, as the individual case may be, of the National system, their judgment has been to trust their cause, not to discussion, but to authority; not to an array of arguments, but an array of names. These, led on by the Dean, and marshalled in the most imposing symmetry of ecclesiastical order, are the arguments with which the subscribers have replied to Mr. Woodward. Stat ratione voluntas.

There is a rapidly spreading feeling, created by the practical pressure of the subject, that continued opposition, now that the National system is unchangeably determined upon by Government, were dangerous and unwise; and a strong and increasing suspicion that there is no obligation on conscience to compel us—nay, to justify us in volunteering to encounter these dangers. But many, especially of the Clergy, who, of course, have been prominently engaged, feel distracted in judgment,

and embarrassed in action, by the opposition which they have heretofore offered to its establishment. But I cannot conceive that this opposition, supposing conscience to present no insuperable obstacle, should operate in the slightest degree to prevent them from making the best of the system, when established without their concurrence—from extracting the maximum of good, and suffering others to extract the minimum of evil, which this powerful machinery contains. The position of the Church is altered. The legislature no longer represents it, and therefore the Church is not accountable for the acts of the legislature, and may avail itself of the benefits of any act, with less liability than in former times to the charge of sanctioning by its submission. The position of the question is altered. It is not now to be discussed, it has been finally decided. The battle has been fought and lost. The only question for us now is, what is the duty of the vanquished? The system itself has practically changed. It has been made, and may still be made, under Protestant patrons, far more than the Kildare-place, or London Hibernian Societies would permit. The Christian Examiner, speaking of Mr. Trench's schools, at CloghJordan, says: "To our surprise we found, that the extent to which he joined the National Board was, that he took salaries from them, but carried on his schools in extreme opposition to the very principle of the National Board. He has four schools, containing about four hundred Protestants, and but six Roman Catholics, in the midst of a Roman Catholic population. He is the patron of the schools, and introduces what religious instruction he pleases, conforming to the rules, by placing up in the time table of the schools the hours at which such instruction is given. The six Roman Catholics receive exactly the same instruction as the four hundred

Protestants. The mass of the children in the neighbourhood do not go to the school. This is indeed a way of getting funds, but we doubt whether it is an honest way; it is one we should hesitate to adopt, whilst we ask nothing more than an open sanction of such schools, as, in this case, are silently and secretly permitted."

The fact, that Mr. Trench's National Schools are such, as that the Christian Examiner would "ask nothing more than an open sanction of such schools," is candidly admitted. But I cannot see how Mr. Trench "carries on his schools in extreme opposition to the very principle of the National Board," by "conforming to the rules of the Board"—or how he has violated "the very principle of the Board" by giving to four hundred Protestants, and six Roman Catholics, all who are willing to attend, the religious instruction which he has not forced upon those six Roman Catholics, but which they are willing to receive—or how the express consent of the Board, and their continued patronage of his schools, conducted in strict compliance with their rules—schools held up to public view by the discussion to which they have led in Mr. Trench's pamphlet, in his Christian Journal, in his correspondence with the Board and with Lord Clancarty, and, as the Christian Examiner reminds us, in the sad event of the murder of one of the masters, can be called a "silent and secret permission," and not "an open sanction"—or how any doubt can be entertained, whether compliance with the rules of the Board, and the most public avowal of the state of the schools, be an honest way of getting funds to support them.

The fact is, a Protestant patron may have any thing he could desire for his Protestant children, and for his Roman Catholic also, with this one exception, that he cannot force the Bible upon them, if their parents or

guardians be unwilling that they should receive it. In Protestant localities, as Mr. Trench's, he may, and will, have thoroughly Protestant schools, attended only by the few Roman Catholics who are willing to receive his religious instruction. One objection to this is, that in Roman Catholic localities, the priest may have schools as thoroughly Romish, as Mr. Trench, in his locality, has them Protestant; and until the system was finally determined upon by the Government, this consideration, that, for the benefit of Protestant districts, we consented to a system which would deprive Roman Catholic districts of efficient schools, decided me, and I believe many beside, in holding back from it. But it is now firmly established. It may, in Protestant districts, be made an instrument of good; and if the Clergy will become patrons of schools, and see the rules of the Board enforced in Roman Catholic districts, they will save many of the Protestant children from perversion to popery, and procure for Roman Catholics, in the Scripture extracts of the Board, which, in many cases, would be received, when the whole Bible would be refused, the maximum of Scriptural instruction which, in the present state of this country, it were reasonable to hope for, or possible to effect.

I have never understood the Clergy, generally, to assert a right, much less any obligation of conscience, to force the Bible upon those unwilling to receive it. I have understood them to question "the lawfulness of a Protestant legislature establishing any system of national education, which, avowedly and by design, excludes the un mutilated Word of God from its schools." I do not undertake to defend the legislature in establishing the National system of education for Ireland. I was no consenting party. I might, perhaps, with the author of "Second Thoughts," go farther than the Clergy, generally, and question the

lawfulness of establishing any system of public education of which the Church is not the minister. The state is not atheistic, it must approve of some one form of Christianity, and that one, it is its bounden duty to propagate by establishing. And it should establish it alone, and not distract its people with religious varieties, while it should give the most perfect toleration to every form of religion not atheistical or blasphemous, because blasphemy strikes at the root of all religion. And, if religion should be an element in public education, education should be committed to that Church, and that alone; while the most perfect toleration should be given to every tolerated sect to provide for all, who are willing to receive it, such education as it approves.

Church feeling is strongly arrayed against a system which denies the Church her rightful supremacy, as the patron of national education. But it were well to consider whether submission to this inevitable evil, and an earnest endeavour to extract what benefit we may from the system, which, without our consent, has perpetrated it, involves any wound of conscience; and whether it is not essential to the very existence of our Church—not merely in preventing a collision with the Government, but in preventing the National Schools from absorbing our poorer Protestant children into the great mass of Romanism. Under such circumstances, the members of our Church have a strong additional motive for re-considering, at the present crisis, whether their opposition to the determined plan of a not unfriendly Government be the result of enlightened principle, or in any, and what degree, of prejudice: and whether altered circumstances, among which are to be reckoned the wide extension, and practical working of the National system, and this very determination of Government to uphold it, and it alone,

do not justify, nay demand of many who heretofore opposed, now to avail themselves of the much needed aid which the Board is willing to afford. This I believe to be an increasing feeling among the members of the Church, and I can see no inconsistency in it. It was natural and reasonable that the Established Church should stand out upon the privileges which it formerly possessed, as the sole accredited and endowed teacher, by whom the national grants for education were dispensed. But if the Government have deemed it expedient, or have been forced by the pressure from without, to withdraw their exclusive privilege, I cannot see that the members of the Church are thereby obliged, in honour, or in conscience, to commit a political suicide; to deprive themselves of the aid which would be liberally granted to them, and without which experience now proves that their schools cannot be supported—to transfer their former exclusive privilege to a hostile Church—and, by persevering opposition to the best plan for national education which the most friendly Government they can expect has been able to secure for them, to strengthen the hands of their bitterest enemies, and weaken the hands, and alienate the affections, of their best political friends. It is a matter of doubtful question, whether united education is calculated to allay, and not to excite the present ferment, political and religious, by which our unhappy land is agitated. But if there is to be united education, and if the Established Church is *not* to be its exclusive patron, I see no system which could more fairly provide, not only for the secular, but for the religious instruction of the people, to the extent to which they are willing to receive it, than does the system into which the National Board has fallen. I say fallen, for whatever may have been the original intentions of the Board, and upon these I cannot

but think that the opposition of the Church has operated beneficially, it is now permitted to every patron to minister religious instruction to the fullest extent which the parents and guardians of the children will permit—his only restriction that he must not force any amount of religious instruction upon reluctant minds. And this is a restriction for which the days may not be remote when we shall feel deeply thankful. In fact, the only principle which seems involved—not in establishing, but in availing ourselves of the aid of the National system—is what I much suspect to be a mistaken principle, that of forcing the Bible, under penalty of exclusion from secular education, upon reluctant Roman Catholics—for if they be willing that their children should receive it, the National system fully justifies its use.

Strong language is sometimes used by those who object to receive aid from the Board, and very high and holy ground is taken. To establish a school with the funds of the Board, which very probably they cannot establish without them, is said to be “robbing the children of the Word of God.” If we are to live in the dreamy regions of theory and not of fact, of prejudice and not of truth; if systems are not to be viewed with any reference to practice, and the actual condition of things, such language may be very imposing. But if the actual truth of things is to be considered, I do retort upon them, that the objectors, and they alone, rob the children of any portion of the Word of God. Observe, we have, by the regulations of the Board, a full right to give the Scriptures to all who will receive them, and that it is, therefore, very unfair to speak of the patron of a National School as *withholding* the Scriptures from persons who refuse to receive them, when the real fact of the case is merely this, that he does not *force* them upon the unwilling—or rather

make a futile attempt to force them, for even though the Board had given the right, it could not have given the power to compel the reading of the Scriptures. It might indeed have barred out the Roman Catholics from its schools by flinging the Bible upon the threshold, for I can use language no less strong to describe the rough handling which that sacred volume has met in the scuffle to "honour the Bible," by forcing it upon those who are constantly flinging it back upon us, but it could not have compelled the reading of the Scriptures; and therefore the patron of a National School withholds the Scriptures from none, because he gives them to all who will receive them. Not so the objector who has not means to establish a school of his own. He withholds the whole Bible from his own children, so far as the school is concerned in imparting it, and remember that this is the only matter at issue; out of the National School, as far as the Board is concerned, he may force the Bible upon whom he will; and he withholds the Scripture extracts, a considerable portion of the parts of Scripture best suited to the young, from many who, if he established a National School, would receive them. Suppose the Church Education Society to succeed, which, in defiance of facts, requires no small degree of faith, nay, suppose it capable of establishing, in every parish, a school which could compete with the well endowed and well equipped National School, and surely we could scarcely expect this, but suppose these most favourable improbabilities, what would then be the state of the case? There would be in each parish, two well appointed schools, the one a Church Education school, from which, during the hours of common instruction, Church education was excluded, in order to win the attendance of Roman Catholics, not one of whom, when the antagonist systems had put forth their strength,

would attend, or be permitted by public opinion to attend, except it might be for the purpose of embarrassing the free action of the school, the other educating all the Roman Catholics ; and, as a necessary result of the refusal of all Protestant interference, educating them in unmitigated Romanism, not only without the Bible, but without the Scripture extracts of the Board, which a Protestant patron could in many cases introduce.

To say that Roman Catholics would still attend the Church Education Society schools, after the National system had rooted itself and flourished under a fostering Government, and to quote, in proof, their former attendance upon the Association, Kildare place, and London Hibernian Society schools, were a strange and dangerous delusion. The times are changed : let us look well to it that the tables are not thoroughly turned, and that our children are not compelled to become attendants upon Roman Catholic schools, by our inability, if we refuse Government aid, to provide them with schools of our own. The Roman Catholics in former days did indeed, many of them, attend our well endowed schools, at the bidding of landlords and benefactors, when they had to choose between them and some vile hedge school. This is no proof that they will desert a well equipped National School, under the patronage of the parish priest, now a man of power and influence, to attend upon what, as far as the Church Education Society, or any agency in prospect, promises, may prove a Protestant hedge school—or no school at all. They attended our schools when Protestantism was ascendant in power, wealth, and station, and Romanism prostrate : when the Protestant Clergy were aristocrats, the Romish Clergy peasants. This furnishes no argument that they will desert their own schools to attend ours, when the Romish Church has climbed to

power, wealth, and station ; when the Roman Catholic priests elect our representatives, and rule our rulers ; when, as I have myself lately seen, a titular bishop, with priests, and monks, and friars, all in full canonicals, with their numerous schools, male and female ; the trades unions with their banners and paraphernalia ; the gentry, Protestant and Roman Catholic, with their equipages ; the once Protestant Corporation, created to exclude or to keep down rebellious popery, in their robes of office and regalia, follow through the streets of the third city in Ireland the body of a Roman Catholic Mayor ; all business suspended, every shop shut, every eye intent upon this most imposing procession ; the Roman Catholic Clergy in a large body, secular and regular, chanting as they proceed ; and furnishing, as it passes beneath the ancient walls of a Protestant cathedral, the first ill omened exhibition, who will dare to say the last also, of the supremacy of continental popery. No, *Tempora mutantur, et nos non mutemur in illis*. The times are utterly changed ; and if Protestantism has not humility enough to bend its high spirit in accommodation to its altered circumstances, if it has not christian philosophy enough to discover, and lay firm hold upon, the essentials of truth, and among them I much doubt that it will find the imperious obligation to force the Bible upon those who are unwilling to receive it, if it has not wisdom enough to consult, in all lesser matters, for peace, for its own best interests, and for the general good, I fear that it may be deserted by all as a troublesome friend, and when too late, awake, in astonishment at its own infatuation, to see that it has alienated its friends, and strengthened its enemies, and sacrificed itself, in an impotent effort to force upon others a benefit which they as obstinately rejected.

But I have supposed that the Church succeeds in pro-

viding schools to the full extent of the wants of its own people, and I think I have shewn that in this, the most favourable view of the case, it may protest for the right, but will make no progress towards the attainment of the power, to force the Bible upon a single reluctant Roman Catholic; and will lose the power which it might exercise, as patron of a National school, to introduce the Scripture extracts in many cases; and thus, that the objector to, and not the patron of a National school withholds any portion of the Scriptures. But suppose the Church Education Society fails, and in point of fact it has failed, in its efforts to establish schools, we then not only fail utterly in the object for which we have made such sacrifices, the placing the Bible in the hands of Roman Catholics, but in numberless instances we become instrumental in withholding it from our own children, so far as a school is concerned in imparting it. We suffer the Roman Catholic Church to occupy the place which the Protestant Church had heretofore occupied, as the endowed and authorized minister of education; and, by our non-interference, to make that education thoroughly unscriptural, excluding not only the Bible, but the Scripture extracts, and introducing every Romish formulary; while from those dangerous schools, in which the priest is paramount, and the vast majority of one mind, we shall find it wholly impossible to keep our isolated Protestant children; who, unprotected there by our countenance, will almost inevitably be absorbed into the great mass. Ought it not to be some principle of manifest, of essential, of imperious obligation, which could justify us in encountering such awful and inevitable results?

The Government already is at issue with the Church on the theory of education, beware lest the Protestant laity also may not come into collision with the Clergy on

the practices of the question. The suppressed murmurs of the laity, and their calmly expressed doubts as to the wisdom of the course which the Clergy are pursuing, may be stimulated by our pathetic appeals. They may hear us with impatience when we state the utter destitution of the lambs of our flock, and the need of large contributions on *their* part to provide schools, not proportioned to the numbers, but to the dispersion, of our poor Protestants. If, in every parish, there were a flock of children which could fill the school, an appeal would be more patiently listened to. But the spirit which would confiscate parishes with but a few Protestant souls, will burn with impatience at an appeal for the support of a school, on such a scale as to be useful, for a few Protestant children. Such an appeal will, I fear, be met by the laity with a charge against the Clergy, that they, by refusing Government aid on a mistaken and unintelligible principle, have been the sole cause of the melancholy state of things which they so feelingly depict, and which they should have foreseen and prevented.

I am well aware, that every statement of the ruinous consequences which must result from suffering the public fund for education to pass altogether into the hands of the Romish Church is met by a full admission of its truth, but an assertion that we are not accountable ; that we are passive, not active causes of them. But experience should have long since taught the Established Clergy, that passive resistance is often a most active agency, and that to do nothing is often to do a most desperate deed. To do nothing when the flood or the flame was about to seize us, and there was an avenue of escape, were suicide ; not to stretch out the hand to relieve others, were little short of murder. The able bodied man who threw himself into the doorway, through which you sought to escape from a

murderer, and barred your exit but by the *vis inertiae*, should make a strong case indeed to justify himself from the charge of active participation in the murder. But if passive acquiescence exempt us from the guilt which would result from active participation in the mischief, which, it is admitted must be the effect of the opposition to, or non-interference of the Clergy in the Government plan of education, let us at least extend this principle to the other side of the question. Let us recollect that we give but a passive acquiescence to the determination of the legislature that the Bible shall not be forced on the reluctant. Nay, that we may become patrons of National schools, and thus remedy the evils upon one side, and do this under a strong protest, and petition to the legislature against this part of its scheme, and thus become, in the most effectual manner, active opponents of it.

And for what are all those benefits sacrificed, and those evils incurred? The reply is, to put honour upon the Bible. Assuredly, if rightly understood, and rationally pursued, no more glorious object could be contemplated. If that object be "that the Word of God may have free course and be glorified"—if it be to win men's hearts to receive the truth in the love of it"—if the Bible be freely given, and freely received, as God's best gift to man, heard with devout and reverential feeling as the voice of God; obeyed with implicit and profound submission as the revealed will of God, then, indeed, the Bible is honoured, God is glorified, and man is blest. But is it to honour the Bible, to force it upon reluctant consciences, which this very compulsion has led to loathe and abhor it?—No. To make the Bible a bugbear, the hated cause of exclusion from the valued privilege of secular instruction; to force it into hands which, when unfettered, fling it back with disdain, or secretly mutilate its pages, and

convert them to the profanest uses, this is not to honour the Bible—this is not to secure “that the Word of God may have free course and be glorified.” I am convinced that nothing has tended more to depreciate and dishonour the Bible, and to bring it into that practical contempt in which, I grieve to say, it is held by too many around us, than the unwise, not to say unholy, efforts which Protestant zeal, and often mere party and political zeal, has made to force it upon Roman Catholics. I confess I have sometimes felt humbled, and wounded for the honour of God’s Word, in a school where the reading of the Bible was the condition of entrance, when I have observed Roman Catholic children, who received gratefully every other instruction which I could minister, using every little manœuvre to avoid joining the Scripture class; and when they had, with manifest reluctance, joined it, their open confidence banished, their suspicions aroused, their affections alienated; so that I have often been led to fear, lest the suspected channel through which they flowed should taint, in their mind, even the fundamental truths of our common Christianity, which, in their suspicious ignorance, they might mistake for the dogmas of feared and hated Protestantism.

How would the pious mind reluct at the application of this principle to a similar case. How would it protest against the notion of putting honour upon the Holy Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper by compelling its observance under penalties and exclusions. None, I believe, desire the practical revival of that obsolete rubric which enforced communion “at the least three times in the year, of which Easter to be one.” Few, I believe, disapprove of the law which dispenses with that sacrament as a stepping stone to office. Such use of the sacrament was justly deemed, not to honour, but to profane it. And why, if

Roman Catholics, as such, are to be admitted into our schools, should violation of conscience be an indispensable preliminary ; and why should the Bible be rendered odious, by making it the instrument of inflicting the wound ? Suppose a school opened in any locality, for the purpose of teaching the inhabitants some useful art which they were anxious to learn, and that some of the patrons, with a mistaken view of putting honour upon the Holy Sacrament, were desirous of establishing it as a rule that no individual should be admitted into that school, and taught that art which he was so anxious to learn, unless he would first receive the Holy Sacrament ; would, I ask, the man who insisted upon, or the man who opposed and protested against this, as a necessary condition of instruction, be he who in reality put honour upon that Holy Sacrament.

Mr. Ryland occupies some pages of his pamphlet with what he very properly styles "minute criticism," to which he says he is "ashamed to descend," and to which I do not wish to apply his charge against "Mr. Trench, and others who entertained similar views," that "ingenuity, and special pleading, and what seemed like throwing dust into the eyes of enquirers by a multiplicity of words, were quite out of place." His object is to shew, in express contradiction to the second general rule of the National Board, that religious instruction *cannot* be given during the fixed school hours.

That rule, as regards religious instruction, is, "that the time for giving it be so fixed, that no child shall be thereby, in effect, excluded, directly or indirectly, from the other advantages which the school affords. Subject to this, religious instruction may be given either during the fixed school hours or otherwise." Surely this rule expressly asserts that "religious instruction may be given

during the fixed school hours:" and surely it assumes that the one restriction which it imposes, namely, that "the time for giving it be so fixed, that no child shall be thereby, in effect, excluded, directly or indirectly, from the other advantages which the school affords" is compatible with this. Surely it were hard to think that it was only "by a little contrivance, it were possible to have the Bible read even during school hours," that in doing so, with their express permission, "you are guilty of violating the confidence placed in you by the Board," and that it were possible to effect it only by "stooping to do away with the Board's order by a paltry artifice, and purchase a free use of Scripture by a sacrifice of honesty and truth." Mr. Woodward exercises more charity, and thinks otherwise. Mr. Ryland thus quotes him, "what" he asks, "have Clergymen and laymen who approve of joint education, and are, at the same time, *friends to liberty of conscience*—what have they to object to in National Schools of which they may themselves be patrons?" "The Bible, the whole Bible is freely given to all who will accept the boon."

"Softly, Mr. Woodward, I conceive it is not so. Suppose a school of fifty pupils with one objecting child. Can you read the Scriptures during the period of general instruction? I answer, no, you cannot. If the one objector be present, then no 'religious instruction' or 'reading of the Scriptures' can be had. If, to obviate this difficulty, the objector be removed, the child is, in effect, excluded from the advantages which the school affords, and you are guilty of violating the confidence placed in you by the Board."

Now, even if the Scriptures could *not* be read "during the fixed school hours," notwithstanding the express permission of the Board, would that falsify Mr. Woodward's

assertion, that, in the schools, and by the patron, "the Bible, the whole Bible, is freely given to all who will freely accept the boon?" But I do believe that the Board did not subject itself to the charge of "ingenuity, and special pleading, and throwing dust into the eyes of enquirers," when it assumed that the Scriptures might be read "during the fixed school hours," and yet "no child be thereby, in effect, excluded, directly or indirectly, from the other advantages which the school affords." And I am convinced that any patron, desirous of having a National School in which the Scriptures were read by all who are willing to receive them, and yet honestly desirous of carrying out the object of the Board, that "no child should be thereby excluded, directly or indirectly," not for an hour from the school, but "from the other advantages which the school affords," would easily discover how the two might be reconciled. If there be two school-rooms, those who objected to be present at the reading of the Scriptures in one, might be removed to another, and there occupied by the master or monitors in the ordinary school business; so that the only persons "excluded from the other advantages of the school" by the reading of the Scriptures "during the fixed School hours," would be those who were actually employed in reading them. But even suppose there were but one school-room, and suppose Roman Catholic parents objected to have their children occupied in another part of that room in writing, or arithmetic, or some other quiet business, which would not interfere with the religious instruction of the others; and supposing also the home of any too distant to permit their reaching it, and returning to resume the ordinary school business with their Bible reading school fellows, then, the Scripture reading hour might be made *their* dinner hour, or, if the season

permitted, their play hour ; if the season did not permit, either they, or the Scripture readers, might be received into the master's private apartment. In fact, various modes, according to various circumstances, would present themselves to any who were honestly desirous of reading the Scriptures during the fixed school hours with the willing, and yet of conforming to a rule whose evident object it was to prevent any manœuvring patron, more zealous than honest, from abusing this permission into a means of excluding, or forcing the Bible upon, Roman Catholics. If any other business be going on, while the Scriptures are being read, let the dissentients engage in it. If none be going on, they are excluded from no advantages which the school affords—except the reading of the Scriptures.

This rule, then, narrows the question on which Protestants have to decide within a small compass. The Church Education Society has put to proof the capability, or rather the willingness, of the country to support Scriptural schools, unaided by public grants, and has demonstrated, that even the stimulus of controversy on this so hotly agitated question has been insufficient to make any practical impression ; and that if the South of Ireland, at least, is to depend upon the Church Education Society for the support of its schools, the education of our people will be hopeless. In Mr. Woodward's diocese there is not a single school supported by the Church Education Society. The most which that Society has been able to effect in his diocese is a reduction on the price of books which it recommends for the schools. There are schools, indeed, which have placed themselves in connexion with the Church Education Society, but their funds are derived from other sources, public or private, and scarcely any of them which is not anterior to the

Church Education Society. Without public aid, then, any scheme for the general instruction of the people, or even the members of our own Church, were utterly hopeless. But I believe it is now indisputable that such aid can be expected only through the medium of the National Board. The question then is, whether the members of the Church, clerical and lay, are to see the children of their poorer brethren growing up in utter ignorance, or educated at a National School in which the Romish priest is suffered to possess despotic power; to invert the former state of things when the Protestant school was well equipped and well conducted, the Roman Catholic school a wretched hedge school—and to refuse all aid from Government, though we cannot maintain schools without it, and see the funds liberally supplied by the state ministered by the Romish Clergy, and made the instrument of perverting our own people, unless—for this is the point to which this rule narrows the question—unless the Government will permit us to force the Bible upon the reluctant consciences of our Roman Catholic brethren, under the penalty of exclusion from secular instruction. I say “force,” because if the parents or guardians of the children are willing that they should read the Scriptures that rule abundantly justifies their use. Do the masters of schools for the sons of our gentry—does the Board of our University force the Bible upon Romanists under the penalty of exclusion? and if not, does the Church protest against this wrong? Would a Protestant parent, or a Protestant pastor, wish his children to read the Bible in a school taught by a Roman Catholic master, and under the patronage of a Roman Catholic priest? And if the golden rule do not sway us, if we will not do to others, as we would they should do unto us, will we not at least remember, that if Romanism

and democracy progress as for the last ten or fifteen years the time may not be very remote when we shall have to thank God that we have not succeeded in forcing the Government to force the Bible, and make religion the subject of united education, which, virtually, would be but a transfer of our people for religious education into the hands of the Romish Church. The field, though many posts are preoccupied, is still open to us. The adversary has not yet concentrated his forces, surveyed and become fully aware of the strength of his position. The Romish Church has not as yet occupied, in this country, the commanding post which it has sometimes filled, at other times, and in other lands, as the able minister of education. The funds for education having been heretofore in the hands of Protestants, all fair competition on the part of the Romish Church was excluded, and her tactics were to check the progress of her flock to an education which would have brought them within Protestant influence. And I do believe that it was the not unreasonable fear of Protestant influence, much more than of education, which led the Romish Church to oppose the entrance of her children into our schools. A great body turns slowly. It cannot be at once brought to change its long formed habits of thinking and acting. But the time may come, and that not very remotely, when the Romish Church will open its eyes fully to the power of the instrument which we have abandoned to its use—when Jesuits, Monks, and Nuns, trained to, and existing for, this one object—passive shall I say, or active instruments of bigotry, will be delegated to the management of our National Schools, under the patronage of parish priests; and by the worldly wisdom and harmony of their arrangements, emanating from a common head, devoted to this one important object; by the extent of

their instructions, and the efficiency of their teachers, so thoroughly put down all the competition of voluntarism on our part, that we shall find it impossible to restrain our children from attendance on them; and shall have cause to feel thankful that the Government had not, at our urgent solicitation, inflicted on us the penalty, which our Scriptural schools have in former times inflicted upon Roman Catholic children—exclusion from a superior secular education, which, under such circumstances, our children will have at any risk, except on the condition of receiving with it the portion of religious instruction which the patron may choose to minister.

But Mr. Woodward is said to be disqualified, by his inconsistency, from giving any opinion on this matter, because he has not placed his own schools under the rules of the Board—availed himself of its funds, and tried the system for himself. But is Mr. Woodward, who disapproves of united education, disqualified from judging what those who approve of it may do “on their own avowed principles, registered in formal, written, and authorized statements,” only because the opposite principle which he avows leads to an opposite practice? Is Mr. Woodward, with ample funds for the support of such schools as he most approves of for his own parish, and for those of his brethren, if they could effect them, disqualified from suggesting what *they* had best do who have neither schools, nor funds to support them, only because he does not fling away his superior advantages, and descend to their level? Then the healthy physician is disqualified from prescribing for his sickly patient, unless he first swallow a dose of each drug which he prescribes—the wealthy heir is disqualified from recommending to his younger brothers the profession which it were prudent for them to embrace, unless he lead the way, and first

himself embrace it. On the contrary, should not Mr. Woodward's less favourably circumstanced brethren, who might be tempted to distrust the judgment to which their necessities inclined them, feel that they had in him, from his more favourable position as a mere spectator, and not a party directly concerned, the benefit and support of an impartial and disinterested witness.

But Mr. Woodward is said to be disqualified from giving an opinion because he is not, what Mr. Ross calls, a "practical man," in other words, a bustling agent for, or against, every scheme for doing good which any body may be pleased to devise. "We have," Mr. Ryland says, "a pleasing view of the learned and holy calm of a good man's retirement, a picture of religious leisure, perhaps too much abstracted from the general good, but leaving upon the reader's mind a deep impression that the ministrations of such a servant of God within his own parish would find acceptance at the last." I should be sorry to comment on this passage were I sure that I understood it rightly in the more favourable sense which it may bear: but the shades and lights are so blended in this "picture of religious leisure, perhaps too much abstracted from the general good," that it is hard to ascertain, from the picture, the characteristic feature of "the ministrations of such a servant of God within his own parish." There certainly is a vast difference between reading the sentence as inaccurate and incomplete, and understanding the "deep impression upon the reader's mind" to be, that "the ministrations of such a servant of God within his own parish would find acceptance at the last" *day*; and understanding it to be, as the words imply, that *although* his "religious leisure" was "perhaps too much abstracted from the general good," yet that the "deep impression" was, "that the ministrations of such a

servant of God," though confined to his own parish, and from their defect of more extended usefulness unaccepted now, would, notwithstanding all his shortcomings, be ultimately accepted. But, in any view of this passage, I am unable to comprehend how it is, as in Mr. Ryland's following sentence, that "the mind and privileges which Mr. Woodward enjoys" should consign him to "a religious leisure, perhaps too much abstracted from the general good," and yet from which "in this busy world those must turn who have not the mind and privileges which Mr. Woodward enjoys:" unless indeed it be, that Mr. Woodward's pen, and preaching, his influential conversation, and holy walk, none of them restricted by the limits of his own parish, may be thought abundantly to compensate the restless activity of the less gifted actors in this busy world; and that, in fact, his "religious leisure" is less "abstracted from the general good," and more abstracted from "this busy world," than more bustling agents are apt to imagine.

But Mr. Woodward is disqualified from offering an opinion by his love of paradox, and of this his pamphlet on tithe is given in evidence. So, at the time, it was thought by some, quite as much as are now his "Thoughts on the Points at Issue;" but I believe there are few Clergymen *now* who do not thank God that tithe was exchanged for rent-charge, not only for peace sake, but also for property sake: and who are not convinced, that had the Church retained all her worldly treasures on board, she must have foundered, and perhaps carried with her much beside that was valuable, in the storms which have swept the political sea from that period to the present.

In speaking of Mr. Woodward's remark "on their own avowed principles—I cannot see what there is to prevent the members of the Church Education, the

Kildare place, and if there be any other Society of kindred views, from acting individually, and in their several locations, under the rules of the National Board," Mr. Ryland says, "and to this conclusion he comes, without at all mooting the point, whether the Government are right or wrong in the establishment, the construction, or the arrangements of the system." Perhaps, so far as Mr. Ryland's statement is correct, Mr. Woodward declines entering upon the discussion of these topics because he addresses himself, not to the Government, but to the Clergy, because he conceives "the point for our consideration is, not what Government ought to do, but what *we* ought to do," and that "it may be, that many of the Clergy in prescribing to their rulers what *their* duty is, have forgotten that which is properly *their own*—have neglected, at least, to give a calm and dispassionate consideration to what part it would be wise in them, under existing circumstances, to act." But Mr. Woodward unequivocally manifests his own sentiments upon the subject, not only elsewhere, (p. 8,) but in the very passage which Mr. Ryland has condensed, but, in condensing, has suffered its essential spirit to evaporate; and in which he carefully guards himself from the retort of his *ad hominem* appeal, (p. 15.) Mr. Ryland proceeds, "nay, he goes still farther, and hesitates not to assert, that the National system of education being authorized by the legislature, obedience is as much due to it, as it is due to an Act of Parliament," and again "Mr. Woodward next passes from this almost treasonable contempt of the law." It is wholly unnecessary to discuss here, the question of passive obedience, Mr. Woodward does not enter upon it. Mr. Ryland mis-states, because he wholly misunderstands Mr. Woodward, in what, but for the fact of his misapprehending it, one would think it almost impossible to

mistake. Mr. Woodward does not assert that "obedience is as much due to it as it is due to an Act of Parliament." He does not himself give it this unreserved obedience. He ventures to say that he does not approve of joint education. His own schools are not National, but Church of England schools, well supported, and well filled; and doubtless, in perfect consistency with the views which he here puts forward, he would far prefer to National Schools such schools as his own established throughout the land. But if such schools cannot be established—and it were fanaticism to expect it—he cannot see why approvers of the Kildare-place, and kindred Societies, should suffer their children to be deprived of all the benefits—and even more than the benefits, which those Societies would have conferred, merely because they are not allowed to force the Bible, under penalty of exclusion, upon unwilling Roman Catholics.

In asserting that "the point for our consideration is, not what Government ought to do, but what *we* ought to do," Mr. Woodward proceeds. "And still it is very difficult to get some persons to keep this clear distinction in their minds. They talk of joining or not joining, what they call the National Education Society. But nothing, properly so called, exists. One might as well call obedience to an Act of Parliament joining the Parliament Society. If, indeed, as in religious or other such associations, a set of independent individuals unite together to originate or carry into execution a plan or purpose; and if we voluntarily enrol ourselves in their number, we become morally accountable for all the principles of the scheme, and all the ingredients of the compound. But the case before us is totally of another kind. And it may be, that many of the Clergy, in prescribing to their rulers what *their* duty is, have forgotten that which is properly *their own*. They have neglected,

at least, to give a calm and dispassionate consideration to what part it would be wise in them, under existing circumstances, to act," (p. 16.) Here the one object is to shew, not that the National system is instituted by act of Parliament, and should therefore be universally adopted, under penalty of that "treasonable contempt of the law" of which he is himself guilty, but to mark the "clear distinction," which some forget, between a "voluntary association of independent individuals," of which we, by joining ourselves to it, become constituent parts, and therefore "morally accountable for all the principles of the scheme, and all the ingredients of the compound," and availing ourselves, in all that is not sinful to us, of such privileges as the National Board confers—a Board of which we are not members, and which has been created, not only without our consent, but in opposition to our strongly expressed opinions: and that to talk of joining the National Education Society, when nothing, properly so called, exists, were as absurd as calling obedience to *any* Act of Parliament joining the Parliament Society, and becoming, thereby, morally accountable for every other Act which it passed. In fact, the very essence of the passage is the distinction between voluntary union with a voluntary society, in which we become accountable for every thing, and meek, if not complacential, submission to the acts of a governing body independent of our control, while availing ourselves of so much of the privileges they confer, as are lawful for us to receive: just as the Chaplain takes his salary, and uses his privileges, while submitting, not merely to the appointment of a Roman Catholic Chaplain, but to the very same restrictions in forcing the Bible upon the Roman Catholic inmates of the gaol or workhouse, as the Protestant patron in his National School. And yet, with this passage before him, whose grand object it is to

enforce this distinction, Mr. Ryland goes on to say, "He seems to think that sanctioning a principle voluntarily, differs in no respect from giving it an involuntary submission."

Mr. Ryland indeed asserts that the cases of the Protestant patron and Protestant Chaplain are not analogous: that in the latter case "there is no sanctioning of principle involved—no compromise entered into; the Protestant Chaplain is not required to submit to rules and regulations other than those which concern himself." But what are the "rules and regulations other than those which concern himself," to which the Protestant patron is required to submit, and the Protestant Chaplain not? The Protestant patron is required not to force the Bible upon the Roman Catholic children of his National School, the Protestant Chaplain is required not to force the Bible upon the Roman Catholic inmates of the gaol or workhouse. In neither case is there any compromise of principle. Both do only that which it is lawful for them to do, in teaching those who are willing to learn from them. Neither forces the Bible upon the Roman Catholics with whom he is brought in contact by his official position—for this is the limit of his restriction—out of his school, or out of his workhouse, either may, so far as the state is concerned, force the Bible upon whom he will. But within those walls, even though he should conceive it lawful to force the Bible, if permitted, he feels himself justified in abstaining from it by his inability to perform it. His poverty, if not his will, consents.

The cases of the Protestant patron and Protestant Chaplain are precisely analogous, only with far higher *motives* in the case of the former. The one to rescue the fund for education from the hands of the Romish Clergy, not with any selfish private view, but to save many of his

poor Protestant children from being absorbed into the Romish Church, volunteers to become patron of a National School, in which, by regulations of the body which established the system, of which he is not a member, and by which he has not been consulted, he may give the whole Bible freely to all who are willing to receive it, but subject to this restriction, that he shall not force the Bible upon any whose parents or guardians object to it. The other, to obtain a professional appointment to which a salary is attached, volunteers to become Chaplain to a public institution, subject to the same restriction, that he shall not force the Bible upon any, much less preach that "only name under heaven whereby we must be saved," to the Roman Catholic, dying in the room in which he ministers, whom he can never meet without the walls of that room, as the patron may the pupil of the National School, but who is now lying upon the confines of the eternal world, his day of grace just about to close for ever.

In defending the Clergy from a fancied charge Mr. Ryland says, "I am unwilling to trust myself in speaking of what Mr. Woodward describes as the sentiments and practices of the great body of the Clergy. His statement would be a bitter censure if it came from another man." I confess I do not understand this: whether it is that Mr. Woodward's censure carries no weight, or that something sanative in the effluxes of Mr. Woodward's pen neutralizes its gall, and sweetens the bitterness of his censure. But what is the value of the charge? Mr. Woodward's belief that "many are in their hearts inclined to give in their adhesion, but are afraid of appearing to desert their party," his conviction "that if certain names were enrolled on the side of the Board, the main body of the Clergy would decide in its favour, that is, I mean, so far as to

express their willingness, now that it is established, to act under it," his declaration, "it was the apprehension that the supposed threat of withholding patronage might, from the causes explained before, check still farther the open avowal of those feelings which induced me to take my pen thus hastily in hand," his explanation of those causes, namely, that "in the first place, their judgment may be warped by a certain jealousy of themselves; for it is the rule of many conscientious men (and would it not be the safest rule for all?) in doubtful and delicate cases, to lean invariably towards the side which makes against their private interests or selfish wishes. And besides, they may dread the suspicions which any apparent change of view, at such a moment, might naturally create, that they were acting on mean and temporising motives," his high testimony to the character of the opposers of the Board, amongst whom he tells us "are to be found some of the brightest ornaments of the Irish Church," all this, Mr. Ryland, "unwilling to trust himself in speaking of," translates into Mr. Woodward's avowal of a suspicion that "if a few great names could be secured to the system, the whole herd would rush headlong into the abyss," and that "already they are worming their way into the sewers of patronage." I adopt, and retort Mr. Ryland's words, "Surely this is an incongruous sequel to the passage upon charity." But is this a correct version of Mr. Woodward's words, much less a correct expression of his sentiments? Surely when Mr. Ryland wrote thus, he could not have read Mr. Woodward's own explicit statement of the motives which induced him to take up his pen, and which give the most distinct and unequivocal contradiction to Mr. Ryland's version. Will the reader believe that the words which I have quoted above, are the words of Mr. Woodward's pamphlet, the words which

Mr. Ryland, by an exaggerated specimen of that distortion of words and sentiments which have pervaded this whole controversy, has perverted into a base and stupid charge, made by Mr. Woodward against the body of the Clergy, that they "are already worming their way into the sewers of patronage." With those who are unacquainted with Mr. Woodward's pamphlet it might be, and perhaps *has proved*, an effective *ad captandem*, to represent him as speaking disparagingly of the opposers of the Board, to whom, in reality, he has borne the highest testimony. And it has perhaps served to increase that undue sensitiveness to opinion, from which it is his wish that they should be set free, to insinuate that all who now cease from opposition are "worming their way into the sewers of patronage." But it were no very extravagant compliment to Mr. Woodward's common sense, not to say common honesty, to hesitate in believing, that he could invite the Clergy to avail themselves of the funds of the National Board, and at the same time assert that, in doing so, they were "worming their way into the sewers of patronage."

I cannot believe, in contradiction to numberless facts, that either the Government on the one hand, (indeed Government has pledged itself) or our Bishops on the other, would refuse to promote a Clergyman, in other respects meritorious, and duly qualified, only because he was an opposer, or a favourer, of the National system. But surely Mr. Ryland should recollect that, in the many dioceses whose Bishops are opposed to the National Board, the great body of the Clergy, who cannot be supposed to speculate universally upon Deaneries, and Bishoprics, or any Government patronage, might far more reasonably calculate on "worming their way into the sewers of patronage" by opposing, than by favouring, the National system.

“Much,” Mr. Ryland says, “not bearing upon ‘the points at issue,’ I purposely omit, and come to a paradox, one of those peculiar favourites of Mr. Woodward. In page 26, he observes, ‘matters being so, that is, the Roman Catholics being conscientiously disposed to submit to their priests on the subject of Scriptural education, the question is, would you force, or would you bribe them to go against their consciences?’ and the answer which he suggests is, ‘Certainly I would not.’” I confess myself wholly unable to discover where the paradox lies in this, which appears to me a plain and simple principle of truth. And I cannot think that Mr. Ryland, even though he should dissent from the principle, will, on reflection, feel, that the assertion of it justifies, must I not say, the sneer conveyed in his words—“a paradox, one of those peculiar favourites of Mr. Woodward.” Perhaps some may think that, in these wild and distracted times, we need more of the ballast of sound wisdom and sterling principle which this so called paradox contains, to quiet those busy spirits who go, in God’s name, upon a mission on which God has not sent them. But, if Mr. Woodward has failed in originating a paradox, Mr. Ryland comes powerfully to his aid, and by that simple process, not often indeed resorted to, but which would convert any text of Scripture into a paradox, merely altering the words which “a little hampered” him, he rescues Mr. Woodward from his difficulty, and furnishes, in the very process by which a sensible and honest man seeks to prove his neighbour paradoxical, a strange paradox indeed. He proceeds, “The argument is a little hampered by using the words ‘force, or ‘bribe,’ but, if instead of these obnoxious terms, you employ ‘persuade’ or ‘induce,’ we have it laid down by Mr. Woodward, that a ‘pure conscience,’ and a ‘defiled’ or perverted one are to

be treated alike." If we change his words! But did it never occur to Mr. Ryland that if "the argument is a little hampered" by using Mr. Woodward's own words "force, or bribe," it were more charitable to give his brother the benefit of the defence which his own words supply, than to change his words, in order to bring them under the indictment, and, Mr. Ryland himself being not only judge, and witness, but criminal also, in Mr. Woodward's behalf, convict him by proxy of a paradox. Did it not occur to Mr. Ryland that Mr. Woodward might not feel disposed, if the option were given him, to pledge himself to conclusions for which Mr. Ryland was afterwards to invent the premises. Perhaps, for I know not, Mr. Woodward might feel disposed to re-consider his assertion in its new dress, only protesting against his words being changed for others avowedly not synonymous, if it were clearly explained to him that to 'persuade' was not to 'force,' and to 'induce' was not to 'bribe.'

But did Mr. Woodward, I mean before he got into Mr. Ryland's hands, understand by "force and bribe" merely to "persuade and to induce?" I should argue from his context that he did not. He there tells us, "I heard a person, who upon other subjects was Christian, kind, and sensible, boldly assert this strange and horrid paradox. I question, said he, whether it be unlawful to tempt a Roman Catholic, by a direct pecuniary bribe to renounce his religion." And now let me ask Mr. Ryland does he seriously believe that he has found a fit analogy to test Mr. Woodward's principle, when he compares forcing or bribing an ignorant, yet perhaps pious Roman Catholic, to go against his conscience, who, in humility and self distrust, would commit his children's education to him whom he deems God's minister, and refuse to permit their receiving from the hands of him whom he

deems an heretical teacher, those Scriptures, which the former has taught him are unsuited to their weak understandings, and themselves declare that ignorant men wrest to their own destruction, with "persuading or inducing to forego their purposes, a heathen mother sacrificing her infant child, or a heathen widow immolating herself on the funeral pile of her dead husband?" "I could not myself," Mr. Ryland goes on to say, "calmly and unmoved, write down the beautiful apostrophe to charity, which follows at this place, and append it to the supposed cases of freedom of conscience for child murder and suicide"—supposed cases! by whom? by Mr. Ryland alone: unless we adopt that coarse casuistry which places suicide, and child murder, and reluctance to receive religious instruction through a suspected channel, on the same dead level: which breaks down all the lines of moral truth, and obliterates all the shades of character. I cannot, of course, answer for Mr. Woodward; but, for myself, I can reply to Mr. Ryland, that "if I saw a heathen mother sacrificing her infant child, or a heathen widow immolating herself on the funeral pile of her dead husband, I would persuade or induce them to forego their purposes; nay" if the strong arm of the law did not restrain me, "I would go to Mr. Woodward's extreme, and 'force, or bribe them to go against their conscience.'" And now, in return, let me ask Mr. Ryland, does he mean, as his analogy and his argument, if they have any meaning at all, any bearing upon the case, distinctly assert—does he mean that I should use the same "force, or bribe" in compelling or seducing the Roman Catholic parent, against his conscience, to give, or suffer me to give, the Bible to his child? No! such analogies are but a flimsy veil, to perplex, for a moment, principles which "hamper" us—and to "throw

dust into the eyes" of truth, when about to prostrate, with a home blow, some idol theory. I am far from saying that Mr. Ryland's design in the use of this obnoxious analogy was to mystify and prejudice, though such, to superficial readers, would be its manifest tendency, but I cannot think that clear views ever lead to such clouded analogies.

Mr. Ryland's views of liberty of conscience are novel indeed. "Mr. Woodward," he says, "speaks of friends to liberty of conscience, but in the National system, the privilege is one-sided. They who reject the Bible have ample liberty to do so, but they who would introduce the Scriptures into the schools are in fetters. We only ask to shake off our own chains, and leave others still free." What does this mean? Why plainly this: you give ample liberty to do so to those who reject the Bible; you do not give us ample liberty to force them to receive it.

Mr. Ryland, and others, wince at the galling of the chains which fetter them in their efforts to force the Bible upon Roman Catholics, within the walls of the National School, for without those walls the restriction of the Board does not, and cannot bind them: yet they utter no complaint that they are not permitted, within the walls of any other joint Education Society school, to force the saving truths of the gospel, which many Bible readers miss, upon those who are unwilling to receive them. If they say the Bible alone is sufficient to detach the Roman Catholic from his Church and creed, is it not most unfair to speak of priests and parents as bigoted and unreasonable in refusing to receive it from us. If, on the other hand, they admit that the Bible will leave the Roman Catholic in undiminished attachment to the peculiar tenets of his Church—if, with Mr. Ross, they "indig-
nantly repudiate all desire to proselytize Roman Catholic

children committed to their care and instruction in these schools"—if, as others have been understood to preach, the Bible will no more teach even the fundamental article of the Christian faith, "Trinity in Unity," than the statute law will teach the peculiar requirements of the common law—how can those whose moral boundaries are so broad, that they can see no distinction between freedom of conscience to refuse the Bible, and freedom of conscience for child murder and suicide, feel at ease in co-operating with the Kildare-place and other joint education Societies, which imperatively forbid us to teach creeds, and catechisms, and the distinctive truths, not only of Protestantism, but of Christianity itself, within the walls of their schools—schools, observe, for all whose regulations we are in a great degree morally accountable, as constituent members of the voluntary society from which they emanate—and not like the National Schools, emanating from a Government over which we have no control, and in which we are accountable solely for the acts which we ourselves are suffered to perform.

One man's theory may be, that the state should establish a system of united education, from which all creeds, and catechisms, and every thing definite in religion, should be excluded, the Bible alone admitted as the minister of religion: in fact, that all truth should be excluded, except in such a form as to make no converts; and that to such a system no reasonable persons, how opposite soever their religious creeds, could fairly object. Another conceives that the state should provide ample means for teaching all truth to those who are willing to receive it, and should not intermeddle with the instruction of those who desire to be taught in any error. If either of these could govern the Government he would be morally accountable for the system adopted, and bound to co-operate in none other.

But if there be no control, there is also no responsibility, except for the positive acts which he himself performs. If, indeed, he were called upon to minister religious instruction, and to omit some fundamental and essential truth, if he were called upon to teach, as the truth, a religious system, which, though it contained nothing in itself objectionable, contained also nothing to which the advocates of manifold error could object, he might well reluct at ministering, and, by his ministration of it, sanctioning the belief, that this *caput mortuum*, from which every nutritious element had been extracted, was the bread of life. But he is not called upon to minister religion except where he can minister it in its fulness. In the withdrawal of the Scripture extracts, at the will of the patron, the system of the Board has become practically that which some of the present opposers of the Board desired—secular instruction for all, provided by the state; religious instruction for each, provided by his pastor or guardian.

The author of "Second Thoughts" objects to the National system, that it has usurped the prerogative and privilege of the Church, and dictated to her the religious instruction which she is to minister. But surely this is a mistaken view. Her own members the Church may instruct in all her doctrines, unquestioned by the Board; and even the Roman Catholic any where but in the schools which the state has endowed, not for the exclusive benefit of *her* children, but for all the children of the state. If indeed the patron of a National School were required to pledge himself, that, from the moment a child entered his school, he would abstain, at all times and places, not only from inducing him to read the Bible, but from endeavouring to make him acquainted with all truth, he "might well forbear." But the state makes no such

demand. The state does not prescribe to the Church, in any case, the amount of religion it shall minister, but prohibits the Church from forcing any religious instruction on those who object to receive it, in a house, and at hours, which it has devoted to other objects; just as it would prevent her from converting the Court of Assize into a chapel of ease. The parish Clergyman may, for aught the state cares, provided no breach of the peace ensue, strive to convert to the Church every attendant on that Court, at another time and place, but there he must be silent. The chaplain of a gaol, or workhouse, or hospital, may seek to convert every Roman Catholic inmate, but it must be at some other time and place. In fact, the state has founded all those institutions, designed for the common benefit, not for religious, but for secular purposes, and protests against being made a party to any religious intermeddling, while it gives perfect liberty to all. Within the walls, we have free access to all who are willing to receive us. Without the walls, we have, as far as the state is concerned, free access to all, willing or unwilling. But the state guarantees to all, who avail themselves of the benefits which its public institutions offer, religious liberty the most perfect and undisturbed. And if the education provided by the state be avowedly common, I see not on what principle it can be exempted from the same law. However, let him who thinks it an obligation, or a right, to force the Bible upon those unwilling to receive it, petition and protest against the wrong which prohibits and restrains him, but let not the chaplain of an institution, or the minister of a parish, abandon those who are willing to receive his ministrations, because he is not permitted to force the Bible upon those who are unwilling to receive it.

One feels less disposed to object to any of the plans for

National education—perhaps indeed there is none under which, if established, an honest man could not act with a good conscience, than to the pertinacity with which each is clung to, even when its adoption is hopeless, and when the effect of such pertinacity is, in many ways, most injurious. The essential difference of each plan appears to its advocate to wrap up all excellence, and leave any other worthless and unlawful. To one of the plans before us it is essential that every child who enters the school should read the Bible, no matter with what reluctance. The other admits none who will not receive, not merely the Bible, but also the “Prayer book, creeds, and services of our Church.” And each has his conscience so bound up with the peculiar article of his scheme, that, if this be not conceded, he is paralysed. No matter what his refusal to act may cost, not to himself, but to those committed to his care, and to society, he can touch no other.

The plan of the author of “Second Thoughts” is briefly stated. He objects to united education. Here then “Thoughts” and “Second ‘Thoughts’” are in accordance—and Mr. Ryland, and all the education Societies, are at issue with both. Still further, he objects to any system of education which does not give to all whom it educates, not only the Bible, but the Prayer book, creeds, and services of our Church. He says “As a matter of course therefore (in my opinion) that Prayer book, with its creeds and services, should go hand in hand with those Scriptures in any orthodox educational system.” Every Churchman must assent to this. But the question recurs, can we establish an *orthodox* educational system for those who are determined to continue heterodox. If not, which are we to adopt of the four remaining courses? to establish a heterodox system for each—or a neutral

compound for all—or to give secular instruction alone—or to educate the orthodox only, and leave others to themselves? The essential spirit of the scheme of “Second Thoughts”—in fact all in it upon which none could ground a charge of bigotry and sectarian feeling, seems concentrated in Mr. Woodward’s declaration, “I love to see the filial eye, and full repose of confidence, with which the pupil looks on his own spiritual pastor, as if he could trust him, as, under God, the shepherd of his soul.” Where, then, do “Thoughts” differ from “Second Thoughts?” In this: the one contemplates the system, which they both in substance approve, in the light of an utopian theory as a National system. He thinks that separate education were best, but where that cannot be, then “education purely secular, without any attempt at religious teaching—reading, writing, arithmetic—taught, just as shoemaking and gardening might be, without any reference to spiritual concerns”—not however “leaving out of view man’s true measure, the measure of eternity,” but leaving religious teaching to those, from whom alone each will consent to receive it. The other not only considers his theory as the best, but deems its practical enforcement of such imperious obligation, that he would make the Bible, the Prayer book, the creeds and services of our Church, so indispensable an accompaniment of all secular instruction in our National Schools, that he would prefer leaving even the children of the Church without education, or to be educated in National Schools which he had suffered to fall under the absolute dominion of the Roman Catholic Clergy, to availing himself of any educational system, which, though it gave him the fullest liberty as regarded his own, gave secular instruction to any who would not receive with it the orthodox religious education which his system prescribes. I state, as the

alternative of his system, no education—or education at a National School over which the Roman Catholic priest exercises absolute control, because he dissents, not only from the National system, but from that of all the joint education societies, the Church Education Society included, and would not establish any of them, while he candidly admits that there is no prospect of a system, such as that he suggests, being established.

This theory, not for an individual Clergyman in a favourable locality, but as a National system, soon disposes of itself. It is the best, but it is visionary and impracticable, from the religious divisions of the country, the change in our political constitution, and the spirit of the age: and to wait until the country came round to this system, were to wait until we saw our poor Protestants absorbed, through the National Schools, into the predominating mass of Romanism—to wait upon the shore till the stream of society had flowed into eternity. Its advocate represents no Education Society; he objects to them all, the Church Education Society included, and warns its “supporters lest by their inconsistency they are sanctioning an argument against themselves, and putting it out of their power to answer such a pamphlet as Mr. Woodward’s.” And yet, while protesting against every Education Society which has taken the field, and without hope of any better; and admitting that “the liberty granted by the Board on the subject of religious education, most probably is sufficient for the advocates of united education,” that is, for nearly all the Clergy and laity of our Church, he yet proceeds to ask, “Why is it then that men like Mr. Woodward will vex the Church, and disquiet weak brethren, by lending the influence of their names to such a system of education, as the (so called) National system.” His very next sentence fur-

nishes a sufficient reply. "There can be no doubt, indeed, that the separate use of a large Government grant is a great strengthening of the hands of Romanism in this country, and it is impossible to conceal from ourselves, that, according to present appearance, there is very little prospect of our Church receiving adequate assistance from her lay members, for conducting the education of the poor. If there were vigour and consistency in the Church herself, she might, and I doubt not would, be well supported, but at present she is not. All these things then seem against us, and I confess the temptation of patching up the existing state of things, by coming into the terms of Government, is strong, but surely it is only the more to be resisted on that account." I do not, I confess, see the *vis consequentiæ* here. But to let that pass—how, with these views, does he propose that we shall educate, not even the mass of the people, but the children of the Church? There is no public provision for it. The only voluntary effort with a leading view to it, that of the Church Education Society, he disapproves of. Will he leave them to perish in ignorance, or be trained into apostacy, and to this demand reply, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Or will he, in this emergency, look around, with earnest desire to put down every rising of pride and prejudice which would distort his spiritual vision, not that he may discover some "stone of stumbling, or rock of offence," on which prejudice may build a scruple, but that he may see the fullest lengths to which a good conscience will permit him to go, not for a selfish purpose—there jealousy should place a double guard—but for the rescue of the children of the Church from that destitution in which they must, otherwise, inevitably be sacrificed. Will he not enquire anxiously, whether some of the instrumentalities which Providence has thrown within his

reach, though not all he could desire, or even fully approve, may not yet be made available. This is not one of those cases in which we might fairly say, "I am shut up." There is no avenue of which I thoroughly approve. I must sit still, and leave the extrication to Providence. No. This is a matter too practical, too pressing, too intimately connected with obligations bound upon us by Providence, and which we cannot, if we would, shake off. The children of our Church *must* be educated. Necessity is laid upon us. And until the adamant barriers of sinful compliance shut us in on every side, and repel us back, we must find, or make, a way.

Who the author of "Second Thoughts" is I know not; but I have little doubt, from the spirit in which he writes, that if other resources fail, and private means are at his disposal, he will have a school for his Protestant children in which an "orthodox educational system" will be ministered. But this will not fully meet the exigency, even of his own case, much less that of Protestantism generally. There will be, in the remote extremities of his parish, Protestant outliers, beyond the reach of his parochial school, and to whose spiritual welfare it were vitally important that the adjoining National School should not minister a heterodox educational system. These detached atoms of Protestantism are powerfully attracted, and rapidly absorbed, as experience has furnished but too melancholy proof, into the predominating mass of Romanism. Much less does *his* mode of extrication meet the general case. There are numerous parishes where the Clergyman's income is such as to render it wholly impossible that he could provide a school at his own cost, and where the absence, the indifference, the liberalism, the disapproval of separate education, of the gentry, render other means hopeless. And even if Government were to assent

to the petition of the Church Education Society for a separate grant—which they have positively refused—and which, even had they granted, would have left the author of “Second Thoughts” in the same destitution as does the National system—he could not have shared in it—but even if funds could be raised for such an education society as he could fully approve, there are numberless localities where Protestants are so few, and so isolated, that it were impossible to say where, or how, one would feel justified in planting schools sufficient to shelter and nourish them. No ; there should be indeed an “orthodox educational system,” whether within, or without, the National system, the circumstances of each locality must determine. But if the National system is to continue, and who now doubts that it will continue ? it is of essential importance to the well-being of Protestantism, and thence of the whole community, that the National Schools, which must, under any circumstances, include many of our Protestant children, should be well worked, and well watched. And this can be effected only by Protestants becoming patrons.

The author of “Second Thoughts” speaks of Government entering *our* schools, and prescribing what we shall teach *our* children : but Government does neither. If Government entered our Church Education Society schools, which it has refused to endow, and forbade our teaching, not only our own, but all the children therein, any article of our creed, it would commit an arbitrary and despotic act. But the schools which they enter are not ours, but theirs, established, not for our benefit only, but for that of all the people. And in those schools, they do not prescribe to us what we shall teach our own people, but what, within those walls, we shall *not* teach those who obstinately refuse to be our people—and this, in order to prevent us, or any sect, from making the peculiarities of

a creed the means of excluding others from the secular instruction which those schools were mainly designed to give; and thus, throwing them back upon the wretched hedge schools, which were not merely unedifying, but positively demoralizing. Not that even the Government subjects itself to "the sentiments of abhorrence," which the author of "Second Thoughts" says, "I entertain towards any such vile attempt to misuse my brother man, as is inseparable from the schemes of those who, when dealing with him, leave out his true measure, the measure of eternity, and profess, openly profess, to measure him only by time; to give some scanty and imperfect information (as it must be) concerning his position in this world, without ever hinting at the need of preparing for another." Surely this is not a fair representation of the facts of the case. The lessons hung up, and read, in every National School, and still more, the Scripture extracts, generally read, even at present, but which would be read more generally, if Protestants became patrons of the Schools—these more than "hint at the need of preparing for another world." The Government indeed recognises the right, which the Constitution gives every man, to determine for himself the religious creed which he shall subscribe, and in which he will have his children educated; and assumes that parents and teachers of those several creeds, over whom it possesses no control, will do their own duty. In fact, the question is not, what religion Government should prescribe in schools established for *united national* education—the Constitution gives them no liberty to force conscience—but whether they should at all establish such schools—or, if established, whether they should not be confined to secular instruction. Not whether they should insult the great majority by saying, we have amply provided you with schools, but the Roman Catholic

must become Protestant ; he must reject the authority of his Church and Clergy, and accept the Bible, say Mr. Ross, and Mr. Ryland ; nay, adds the author of "Second Thoughts," he, and every sectary, must become a member of the Established Church, and receive "the Prayer-book, creeds, and services of our Church," before he can enter them—but whether they should not say, we believe that for us to give secular instruction alone were an evil, no matter how great the probability that parents and pastors would supply the lack of service to which the religious differences of the country compel us, and superadd such religious instruction as alone you are willing to receive. We therefore cannot establish a school for secular instruction alone. We believe that the Bible, as interpreted by the Prayer-book, creeds, and services of our Church, teaches, in a definite and intelligible manner, the whole truth of God. These must, therefore, be the materials of that religious education which we cannot but insist upon in all our schools. These we must teach to all who conscientiously think with us. For others, we make no provision, but give them the most perfect and unrestricted liberty. Now this last is precisely what the author of "Second Thoughts" conceives that Government ought to do ; and if he can bring Government to "Second Thoughts" our course is clear. But if not, if he thinks Government fully determined on carrying out its present plan, and if, still further, he thinks that the Church will not be able to provide means for conducting the education of the poor—and we have seen that he does think both these—we are brought back to the practical question on which Mr. Woodward would fix us—"not what Government ought to do, but what *we* ought to do," in so momentous and perilous a crisis.

Whether the system of the Board has changed, or

whether the Clergy were misinformed, blameably or un-blameably, as to what that system originally was, it may be very interesting to the parties, respectively, to determine, with reference to their past conduct, but clearly has no bearing upon the question, what their conduct should be, at the present crisis. The simple enquiry should be, what is the system of the Board? And this enquiry should be made, without any anxiety to find in its original constitution or regulations, and to fasten upon it now, principles against which it may protest, or regulations which experience may have led it to withdraw, or, in the working of the system, to suffer to become obsolete. But our pride is never content with the silent reform of any thing which we have once opposed. Pride demands—and pride refuses, the penitential avowal, and public retractation, of every false, or uncertain step, taken, and retraced, in the progress of a system to its present position. Nor pride alone refuses, but discretion also. Every new and complicated system must be, in many of its details, tentative: and the naked exposure of its mechanism and working, the unforeseen obstacles encountered, the deviations from the original course wisely and temperately made to avoid those obstacles without rash and ruinous collision, all these would, with unphilosophizing minds, and base natures, mar the work, by diminishing respect, and destroying confidence.

I believe no body, when the system was first promulged, had the most remote conception, not only that the children of the Church might be educated in all her peculiar doctrines, but that the patron might put the Bible into the hands of every child, of whatever creed, whose parent did not object to his receiving it: and this, even during the fixed school hours; subject only to one restriction, that this privilege should not be abused into a “pious

fraud," by which Roman Catholics would, practically, be excluded from the other benefits of the school, unless they were content to receive the Bible with them. This present state of the case, and, as regards present conduct, it matters little whether original or improved, narrows the question for our decision to this point, whether to force the Bible, within the walls of the National School, upon Roman Catholic children whose parents we cannot persuade to permit their receiving it, be a duty of such imperious and paramount obligation, that unless permitted to exercise it within the walls of a National School, established, not by us, as volunteers, but by the state, for the purpose of securing joint education; and for which therefore we are no farther accountable than as regards our own acts, we should wilfully transfer the education of the poor, I might almost say even of our own Church, to the uncontrolled dominion of the Romish Clergy: whether, with a confessed inability to provide the means of education, even for the members of our own Church, which the National Schools would amply provide, we should sacrifice them to a theory of education, most just, if carried out to its full extent, which no joint education society can do, none of them even profess to teach what they themselves believe to be the whole truth, and whether, at the expense of the poor members of our own Church, for whom we act but as their trustees, we should, for our generous sacrifice of their interests, win by deputy a crown of martyrdom. What obligation lies upon us—not to say what right have we—to do all this? I know men act thus with a vague impression that principle is involved. But it is such principle as, I will venture to say, is seldom exhibited in the conduct of their worldly affairs. The close personal pressure of these, casts theory into a practical mould, and dissipates the mists of prejudice and scruple.

Our theory of diet may be as perfect as our theory of education. It may embrace the whole field of animal and vegetable food, and their due proportions. But if immured in the dungeons of a prison, and without access to other supplies than those which our gaoler was commissioned to minister, we might petition, and remonstrate, and protest, but we should scarcely reject for ourselves, much less dare to reject for our children, any food which contained some nutritious, and no noxious elements, and suffer them to famish, or to feed upon innutritious and poisonous substances, only because the food supplied, did not contain all that we could desire, or that our theory prescribed; or because we were not permitted to force all the other inmates, however unwilling, to feed upon it.

Wise and Christian men recognise a permitting and restraining Providence, and an order in the circles of duty. "As they have therefore opportunity they do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." When a permissive changes into a restraining Providence, they will not neglect the interior circle of duty, because the exterior is barred against them, but, on the contrary, will read, on that barrier, the expression of the Divine will that they should fall back upon, and fill up more perfectly, the inner circle of home duties, to which they are now, without distraction from abroad, confined. And I do believe that the infidel and latitudinarian spirit of the present times is used by Providence for this very purpose, for correcting that capital mistake of the religious agents of these latter days, which, mainly, prevented the wide diffusion, and the deepening of piety, in our Church, and among our people. The Church awoke, as from a deep sleep, and found that Christianity had well nigh vanished from the earth: that it was now visible only in those

forms and symbols, which, as a casket, enshrined to preserve it, amid the overflowings of ungodliness and indifference. Faith aroused, awakened charity, and charity enkindled zeal. But the zeal begotten and nurtured of young faith and love is but too frequently a zeal without knowledge. The newly awakened eye, untaught by experience to pierce the profounder depths of spiritual truth, and to discover its finer and more delicate shades, could catch only its broader features; could graduate Christianity but by creeds, and confessions of faith, and not by the growth, and vigour, and spirit, of the inner man. When the newly awakened convert should have studied, as an humble disciple in the school of Christ, to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of God," that he might be duly qualified to minister in holy things; when he should have then made his first essay, as a teacher, on those to whom he had free access, and to whose interests, as members of the same body, he was in a peculiar manner bound, he rushed into a crusade against the professors of one form of error, attended by an undisciplined host, many of them mere political partisans, and as far from experiencing the power of godliness as any of those against whom he led them; a crusade impotent as injudicious, and which but wasted the infant strength, and spoiled the yet unformed spirit, of the crusaders themselves. It may be that Providence, in abridging the liberty of the Church in her efforts to act upon those without, designs to throw her back upon the far more important duty, in her present state, of edifying herself, and acting upon those within: and that the branches too luxuriant for the weakly stock are being pruned away, to concentrate the sap, and vigour of the root, in the exhausted and attenuated trunk. It may be that the National system, and peculiarly in reference to the

only stone of stumbling which it now retains, the prohibition to force the Bible upon unwilling Roman Catholics, is designed to furnish a model of the school in which we ourselves should learn, and of the duty which, in its widest range, we should actively set ourselves to perform, namely, to do good, primarily and especially, unto them who are of the household of faith; and to reach the exterior, but in overflowing the interior circles of duty—an order of obligation which, I might almost say, we have for the first time entered upon, and with a manifest blessing, in our Protestant Orphan Societies. May it not be, that, in the present position of the National system, the voice of Providence, as to spiritual things, adopts the language of revelation as to temporal things—"If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." I should fear to refuse hearing this voice in the present dispensation; and if unable, through my own resources, or other providential means, to establish a school which would shelter the lambs of my own flock, I should dread to see them wander to National Schools, over which I had suffered the Roman Catholic priests to exercise unlimited sway—there trained in inevitable and dangerous error, and at fearful risk of total apostacy, only because my theory was, that a Government, over which I can exercise no control, and least of all by unbending opposition, refuses to permit me to force the Bible into unwilling hands, in schools which they, not I, have established, for the purpose of united education; and in which, for all but my own acts, they, not I, are reponsible.

The time and ground of collision between Church and State augur ill for the permanency of our Church establishment. There is, in the present day, a new born zeal for the education of the young, and a before unheard of

protest against any State provision for the religious instruction of adults. There is a spirit of voluntarism prevalent, which, in despite of the evidence of its hollowness and insufficiency furnished by every land which has trusted to it, would leave those who are "dead in trespasses and sins" to create and consult for themselves a spiritual physician, just as the patient, who feels and fears his bodily infirmities, is, and may safely be, left to provide and consult a medical doctor: while, at the same time, there is a zeal for educating the young, that promises to make the National system of Education a rival in funds and importance, to our crippled, maligned, and unequally taxed Church establishment. In such a state of public feeling, it is unfortunate that our Church should be constrained to say to the State, we will undertake that department only of our office on which you set no value—the religious teaching of adults; we will hand over to the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian ministers that department on which alone you set a value—the education of the young. The lesser ties by which the Church was connected with the State, have, of late years, been gradually severed, by the substitution of the magistracy, police, and military, as the channels of communication between the Government and people. The National system of education, if thrown wholly into the hands of Roman Catholics and Presbyterians, will practically establish them, and disestablish the Church.

I know that some are prepared to think that this were a benefit to our Church: that there are some who "regard the establishment as but an accident of its existence (and in some ways at present a very bad accident.*)" This might be very true if the Church had not been established, and contracted all the necessarily consequent impotence and helplessness. But to be divorced, and that not by mutual

separation, but by indignant repudiation, is a very different condition from that of never having been united: and I greatly fear that to disestablish her now, were to annihilate her, as a Church, in Ireland. I can see no more promise in Scripture that "the gates of hell shall not prevail" against a Protestant Episcopal Church in Ireland, than in France or Switzerland. Ministers would not—perhaps could not—be supported. Protestants few and far between—much of the property in the hands of careless absentees—the gentry at home living fully up to, if not far beyond their heavily encumbered incomes—the humbler Protestants instructed only in the converse of that principle, "it is more blessed to give than to receive"—all classes long accustomed, not only to have "the Gospel preached to them without cost," but to throw even the work of charity, in a great measure, upon their impoverished Clergy—with vague notions, and still colder feelings, of Church principle—would soon quietly drop into the neighbouring meeting-house, and see the Church closed without a pang. Every appeal for subscriptions to settle a minister would but detach them from the Church, and bring out, in glaring colours, the before unseen defects of the Church, and the heretofore unperceived reasonableness and excellence of dissent. Ashamed to avow that covetousness alone restrained them from supporting the creed which formerly they professed, they would begin by softening down the differences, then preferring the peculiarities of the convenient dissenting congregation; and soon range themselves, as all who know the history and mechanism of the human mind will readily admit, among the most bigoted opposers of the Church.

But to any appeal emanating from "fear of the shipwreck of our Church establishment," the author of "Second Thoughts" replies, "What does Mr. Woodward

consider the Irish Church to be, that he addresses it in such a worldly manner? I confess for my own part, that I feel very little flattered (as a Clergyman of that Church) by his having supposed it possible that such a motive could, in such a question, have the slightest influence on Irish Clergymen." To this I answer, that Irish Clergymen are not the only parties interested in the preservation and welfare of the Irish Church establishment—that the Church establishment possesses other advantages over voluntarism besides the provision of a secure income for its Clergy, and to which that income should be valued only as subservient—that when Mr. Woodward calls upon the Clergy to "count the cost," I do not understand him as warning them to beware lest the faithful discharge of conscientious obligation may deprive them of their incomes—incomes which, I am convinced, in these days of zeal for vested rights, and recklessness of successors, would be secured to present incumbents, if the frame work of our establishment were this moment taken down: but I understand him as warning them that, unless there be an imperious obligation of conscience, and not a mere scruple or prejudice, unless God has laid this burden upon them, that they must become instruments and agents in the destruction of their Church, they should seriously consider "what it would profit" to hand over the lambs of their flock to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Clergy, then the sheep to the teaching of dissent—to beware lest, in resigning the education of the young, they are not "endangering the existence of the establishment," which he views, not merely as the treasury of Clergymen's incomes, but as "God's providential means of asserting the rights of conscience, of resisting the tyranny of ghostly despotism, and of lifting up the standard of God's Holy Word amongst the millions of this country." This view

of our Church establishment—and is it not the true view?—may perhaps exhibit Mr. Woodward's appeal in a less worldly form.

But to all such arguments the popular answer is ever ready—all this is expediency, and therefore most unprincipled and unlawful. I plead guilty to the charge that for a pastor to avail himself of the National fund, for the benefit, not of himself, but of his flock; teaching to any only what he deems it lawful to teach, and wholly unrestricted in the religious instruction of the children of his own Church, farther than as it might be made a means of forcing that religious instruction upon others; that not to suffer the National education to lapse into the hands of the Roman Catholic Clergy, merely because it is not permitted him to force the Bible upon the unwilling—all this I admit is manifestly most expedient, but I altogether deny that it is in any degree unprincipled or unlawful.

There is a vague and crude notion of expediency prevalent, than which nothing can be more false and fanatical, which identifies the fact and the sin of expediency, instead of recognising the sin only when principle is sacrificed upon its shrine. Rightly understood—in fact to every enlightened and Christian mind, whatever is expedient must therefore be right, for whatever is wrong can never be expedient. Expediency is often an essential element in the calculation and decision of duty. What we should do, or forbear, under various circumstances, is often materially affected, if not altogether determined, by its expediency. What justifies the solemn sentence of death upon the criminal—and more unequivocally still its commutation or reversal? The one answer is, Expediency. What justifies the removal of the gangrened member of the body physical as of the body politic? Expediency. What justifies the tax which cripples the poor man's

resources, and robs him of his hard earned comforts? Expediency. Nor say, this refers to mere worldly matters. St. Paul abridged his Christian liberty only because its practical assertion was inexpedient. "All things," he says "are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." And again, when the very opposite course was expedient, urged men to "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." He circumcised Timothy "because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all, that his father was a Greek." "But neither Titus, who was with him, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised, and that because of false brethren unawares brought in." In these opposite courses, his moving principle was expediency. He was, as he himself tells us "all things to all men, that he might by all means save some." Nor this upon matters of merely trivial religious importance, but on one which, he felt, justified him in solemnly protesting to certain persons, and under certain circumstances of inexpediency, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." These, surely, are wide extremes within which lawful expediency may range. The base expediency indeed—if expediency I must miscall it—which to "worm its way into the sewers of patronage," aye, or to escape the charge of inconsistency, or prop up the interests of party, violates acknowledged principle, is sinful as it is degrading. But to repress our zeal—not, observe, for converting Roman Catholics to the faith—this none of the joint education societies profess even to contemplate—and Mr. Ross, for himself and brethren, indignantly disclaims—but to repress our zeal for forcing the Bible into reluctant hands; to consult the best interests of those committed by Providence to our care; not to compel our poor Protestants (who find it difficult, even with all the

protection we can afford them, to bear up against the overwhelming mass of incumbent Romanism) to send their children to Roman Catholic schools, where they will almost inevitably be perverted, because we will not provide them with safe schools unless we are permitted to force the Bible upon, or exclude, the children of Romanists; to rescue them from this dilemma of apostacy or ignorance, and thus ward off the curse threatened against, and awfully fulfilled upon Israel, that they "which were the head should become the tail," this I admit to be most expedient, I deny to be unprincipled or unlawful.

The author of "Second Thoughts" says, "The prevailing and single character of Mr. Woodward's argument from the beginning to the end of his 'Thoughts' is expediency. He does not so much as hint at the possibility of supporting his position in any other way. The key note with which he starts, is the determination of Government to carry through a plan, as they think, for the political and religious benefit of the country, in consequence of which, he fears the shipwreck of the Church establishment." The author of course does not mean—for it would not be fact—that Mr. Woodward's views of expediency are confined to the preservation of the Church establishment, although that, as we have seen, were no unimportant object. They are mainly directed to the education and well-being of our Protestant children. As regards this, there is the most manifest expediency on the one side, while on the other, to the advocate of united education, there is, in fact, nothing except entire misapprehension, or the most unaccountable infatuation. Misapprehension, if they do not see that the Bible may be freely given to all who will freely receive it, even within the National School; and, without its precincts, the most perfect liberty of aggression. The most un-

accountable infatuation, if they are content to sacrifice their own children for the abstract right, without a shadow of power, to force the Bible upon those who are unwilling to receive it, and who spurn the authority which proposes it.

But all these protesters against expediency, themselves recognise its power. The author of "Second Thoughts" himself practically recognises the law of expediency, though not where it militates against his favourite theory. In important matters, where something must be done, and Providence has barred the avenue to that which is best, he admits the wisdom and duty of doing that which is expedient, provided, of course, it be lawful, (this, and this alone, is the proper subject for discussion) in other words, of doing that which is best, under all the circumstances of the case—best for the present distress.

His pamphlet is my proof. At the very commencement he describes the hard lot of the Church, her convocation hall closed against her, and obliged to conduct her consultations beneath the ignorant and critical gaze of the public. "This," he says, "is a hard lot for her to submit to, and one in which she can never thrive, so long as she does submit to it." And, in addition to many and grievous present evils which he enumerates, "will ultimately, if she remain in it, bring down upon her the righteous judgments of God." And yet with all these evils which he describes pressing, and all those righteous judgments of God impending, he does not hint the slightest fear lest he may sanction this evil by reluctantly submitting to it, in pleading before "a curious and hostile public." He does not wait until Government re-open the hall of convocation, any more than Mr. Woodward waits until Government disclaims all interference in National education, further than by "voting to

the Church, the necessary funds." No, like Mr. Woodward, or to use his own illustration of Mr. Woodward's delinquency,—like Saul, he "forces himself, and offers a burnt offering." In the presence of "a curious and hostile public" he overcomes his scruples, and publishes his "Second Thoughts." "Unpleasant"—a calm feeling amid withering evils, and impending judgments—"Unpleasant," he says, "therefore, as it is to see subjects of such great moment discussed by the Church, in the presence of a curious and hostile public, it is unfortunately the only method now open to any one who desires to communicate with his brethren, and receive the benefit of their advice and correction, and as such, we must lay aside our feeling of disapprobation, and our love of closed doors, and admit the public to our discussions."

Mr. Ryland recognises the law of expediency. His petition is my proof. Surely it was expediency alone which led Mr. Ryland to sign the petition which revived this discussion—a petition which gives his direct and positive sanction, and makes him a consenting party, by his "sign manual," to a system, which would permit the absolute exclusion of the Bible, at all hours, from the many National Schools which are now, or ever hereafter may be, under Roman Catholic patronage, no matter how many Protestants these schools may contain. For permission to introduce the Bible at *all hours* into schools under Protestant patronage, a very small convenience, if any, as far as Protestants are concerned, he consents to permit the exclusion of the Bible at *all hours* from schools under Roman Catholic patronage: thus drawing a broad and palpable line of demarcation between the two classes of schools, which would prostrate at a stroke the idol of all parties—united education: thus, by his own act, hands over the Roman Catholic children, to be

led, bound and blindfold, by their Clergy, which heretofore was the grand cause of complaint against the National system: then consents that from the Protestant National Schools all other religious books, except the Bible, should be excluded; waiving the privilege which Mr. Trench enjoys in its fulness, and which, even in permitting the use of the school room for religious instruction after school hours, enables the Clergyman to meet his children assembled in numbers which, on week days, he could secure at no other time and place:—and all this, not on the intelligible principle that if the Protestant patron has permission to teach in his school, Protestant truth, the Roman Catholic patron must have permission to teach in his school, Roman Catholic error, for he passes “unnoticed the supposed objection, that Protestant patrons are accountable for what is done in priests’ schools, having never heard such a difficulty started.” He is content to give up the Roman Catholics to darkness, provided the priests will take the responsibility upon themselves, which I am sure they are quite ready to do, and declares it to be “the utmost aim of the Clergy, clearly stated in the petition already referred to, that the responsibility of excluding the Scriptures should rest, not on the Board, or on the Nation, but on the individual manager of each school.”

Mr. Ross recognises the law of expediency. The Derry scheme (not to speak here of his present labours in a National School) is my proof. Surely it was expediency alone which led Mr. Ross to plan “that the Government should prohibit in the schools, generally, all religious teaching whatever, except instruction in the Holy Scriptures;” and this, for those alone “whose parents or guardians did not specially object:” providing only “that the school should not be broken up during the reading of the Scriptures”—a poor, or an unfair compen-

sation for the great disadvantage of excluding all other religious teaching, in the many localities where the school is the only place in which the children could be got together, on week days, for a certain hour. Is there not something, too, inconsistent in Mr. Ross's declaration—"I have not seen any thing questionable, or contrary to duty in the Clergy of the Church, not, observe, originating, but acquiescing in such a plan of National education, if originated by the Government," at the same time telling us the plan was one, "in the arrangement of which, I myself had a considerable share?"

There is another point on which those writers, different as their schemes are, agree—the liability which every man incurs of being charged as a seeker for patronage, who hints at the expediency of any availing themselves of the National system. Indeed, one is tempted to smile, when he sees the advocate for forcing the Bible upon reluctant Roman Catholics, writhing, in pamphlets, and on platforms, in the fanciful agonies of martyrdom for conscience' sake, and seeming to think that his fidelity in opposing the National system is a generous sacrifice of his temporal interests—that the crisis has called him to the painful dilemma of violating principle, or taking joyfully the spoiling of his goods. He talks of the inevitable danger which men of the most immaculate principle incur, in advocating the National system, of being charged as hunters after patronage, implying that patronage lies all in that direction, and that from it his stern principle bars him. The author of "Second Thoughts" thinks it impossible, even for a person of Mr. Woodward's character, to "escape being suspected by a suspicious world." Mr. Ross hints at "the time, and place, and objects," of any publication which raises a voice, however qualified, for the National system; hints "that it is possible for some

to feel a desire, if they could consistently, for their own sakes, or for the sake of dear friends and connexions, sons or brothers, to be at one with 'the powers that be'—that there may have come mournfully over the heart of others, a murmur of that rumour, which, whether true or false, has been largely abroad, and largely believed, that the high places of the Church are not for those who, in this matter of education, please not the men that are in the high places of the State." Mr. Ryland goes somewhat farther, and assumes, that any movement towards the National system, and hunting after patronage, are so manifestly identical, that, to add clearness and force to Mr. Woodward's language, he translates his conviction that there is a "disposition in the Clergy to declare in its favour, so far as to express their willingness, now that it is established, to act under it," into a declaration on Mr. Woodward's part, that the body of the Clergy "are already worming their way into the sewers of patronage."

Now on which of Mr. Ryland's contradictory charges is judgment to be had? One count charges, that Mr. Woodward, as an advocate of passive obedience, has summoned the Clergy to submit to the Board under pain of contumacy, and "treasonable contempt of the law." Another count of the same indictment charges, that he would "persuade and induce them" into a submission which violates conscience and duty by motives of the basest expediency. But not to speak here of the unfairness of Mr. Ryland's version, let the opposers of the Board beware lest such hints lead the public to reflect, to survey the ground on which a charge so serious could be based, and, having seen where the balance of patronage really lies, to retort the charge. I do not believe, indeed cannot in defiance of incontrovertible facts, that either

the Government or our Bishops would convert their patronage into a bribe, or that, if they did, the Clergy would accept it. But let us remember that, except in the higher offices of the Church—the bishoprics and deaneries, upon which but a few of the Clergy could, with any shew of reason, speculate, in fact as regards the preferment of the inferior Clergy, the patronage of the Bishops, who are *not* advocates of the Board, is to the patronage of the Government, who are, I should venture on a rough estimate to say, perhaps as twenty to one. Sir Robert Peel has unequivocally denied that “opposition to, or approbation of, the system of National education, was to be the test of the fitness of the parties to receive the patronage of the Church”—and certainly this principle has hitherto been acted upon.

The full extent to which I press this argument is, that, in such a state of the case, no man need fear that he will compromise character, and consequent usefulness, in availing himself of the advantages of the National system; or expose himself to the calumny of hunting after patronage: and that those who would suspect a Clergyman of shaping his opinions in the mould of his worldly interests, and playing the hypocrite for preferment, have twenty times the field for it, because twenty times the number of prizes, among the opposers of the National system. If I distrusted the integrity of our Clergy, I should far more apprehend a persevering opposition to the National system, which I think would be fatal to the establishment of our Church, and fatal also to many of our isolated Protestant children, from a fear, on their part, of alienating their Bishop, to whom, not to Government, they naturally look for preferment; and who, being less brought into contact with the practical grievance, might be disposed to think that the submission, which the necessities of their people forced upon them, was premature and injudicious.

But I trust this schism in the body—those mutual taunts and recriminations, will speedily be removed. Every day the determination of Government not to assist the Church on its own terms becomes more apparent. Every day the inability of the Church, unaided by Government, to educate even its own, becomes more apparent also. And, therefore, every day, it becomes more incumbent on the Church, collectively and individually, to survey its position, and finally determine its conduct. And if the final determination of the Church be, continued rejection of the National fund—if it be the calm deliberate judgment of the Clergy that it is their duty to suffer the ample provision made by the State for education to pass over to the sole account of the Romish Church, “to the great strengthening of the hands of Romanism in this country”—thus to confer upon that Church, circumstanced as it is, an almost omnipotent power of perverting our comparatively few and isolated Protestant children, I trust it will be accompanied with an equally solemn determination that those children shall not pay the penalty of *their* scruple, with a full recognition of the conflicting obligation that *they* should be educated and protected; and that if pen and pulpit fail in raising up an antagonist to, or substitute for the National School, as the case may be, their own purses will provide it. This alternative was suggested to the Clergy assembled in Cashel at the visitation of last year; and practically rejected. There was collected, it is true, on that occasion, for the diocesan branch of the Church Education Society the sum of £61. 10s. But of this, £50. was from the Bishop, and £10. more from one Clergyman. The annual subscription for that, the last year of which the report has appeared, exclusive of arrears to the amount of £13. 10s. 0d. was £47. 0s. 0d. The collection at sermons for the diocesan

branch, £15. 15s. 0d. I confess that this practical rejection of the appeal to exertion, connected with the late determination of Government to uphold the National system, and that alone, led me to feel that it was but just, as well as expedient, to secure a timely retreat for our poor Protestant children. The ultimatum of Government was not then, however, known; but now the case is fully before us. We have, I conceive but this alternative, to provide schools ourselves for our children, by whatever means, and at whatever cost, or to follow them into the National Schools, as we should follow them, if any be so disposed to compare it, into a pest house or a prison. The determination of Government to uphold the National system, as a motive for availing ourselves of its funds, is said to be an *argumentum ad crumenam*. I trust that the Clergy, if they reject the Government aid, will prove it to be so, by their self-denying and effectual efforts to supply, themselves, to their people, the education which they have refused for them from the State.

Public men should carefully analyse the precise character of acts, which assume a form of the most generous and heroic self-denial, and yet are performed mainly at the cost of others; because this capital mistake generates in some a selfish indifference, in others, a morbid and embarrassing scrupulousness. The question of National education is not a question between the Board of education and the Established Church, but between the Board and our people: the Clergy acting merely as the trustees of their flock, and no more at liberty, I will assert, to sacrifice *their* interests for the purchase of some good to others, fancied or real, than the trustee of a marriage settlement to sacrifice a portion of the property committed to his care, in order to further the interests of some other couple less favourably circumstanced. His kindness may be very

beneficial to its objects, but should be ministered at his own cost, and not the cost of others.

The question, observe, is not between a National School under the Clergyman's patronage, and a Bible school supported by the Clergyman's private funds. If that indeed were the question at issue, the Clergy might generously come forward, at their own charges, and those who so felt, might say, we are not content that you have provided us every facility for instructing the members of our own flock in all secular and religious knowledge—that you permit us in every National School which you, or we as patrons, establish, more time for the religious instruction of our own children in the peculiar tenets of our Church than we can find leisure to occupy. No; we will not eat our spiritual morsel alone, or rather, we will not suffer our children to do so. To confer upon our Roman Catholic brethren a benefit which they loathe from us, and obstinately refuse to receive at our hands, we will deprive our children of the advantages which you offer, establish schools at our own cost, and, during school hours, voluntarily give up all instruction in the distinctive articles of our creed. As far as common education in our schools is concerned, we will leave our children as unacquainted with the peculiar tenets of their Church as in your National Schools, in order that we may force upon our Roman Catholic brethren the Bible, which they reject at our hands, and which, if it leave them what they are, can but ill compensate such a sacrifice of our own children; if it detach them from their own creed and Church may, with good reason, be opposed by every sincere minister or member of that Church.

But is even this the true state of the case? Is it a question between a National School, giving every facility which the advocate of united education could desire for

the education of our own people, and a school at our own cost, in which we sacrifice many advantages which we might secure, in order to give the Bible, or rather assert the abstract right to force the Bible, upon our Roman Catholic brethren? Or is the real practical question this—a National School under the Clergyman's patronage, with every facility for the training of his own people in all knowledge, secular and religious, and the Roman Catholics in every thing which they will receive at our hands, and in many parishes no school of our own; in most parishes no school of our own adequately supported; but in all parishes hedge schools, or National Schools, under the unrestricted control of the Romish Clergy, and where unmitigated Romanism will consequently be taught—National Schools which there can be little doubt will daily increase in number, efficiency, and popularity; and from which we shall soon find it far more difficult to restrain our flock, accustomed to Protestant liberty, than the Romish Clergy found it to restrain their flock from our Bible schools.

This is the real question at issue. And if it were contemplated in this view, I am convinced that many a Clergyman of generous mind, without income or influence to establish any school, and yet, in a spirit of martyrdom, as if he were himself the sufferer, firmly opposing the Board of education; at the least, steadily refusing the aid which it offers, and for which his people pine, would feel a load of scruple removed from off his conscience. If he saw that he came forward, not as a martyr but as an executioner, and that of the lambs of his own flock, whom he had doomed to suffer, he would feel at liberty to count the cost; not as between himself and the Board, but between his people and the Board; and calmly to calculate the only question which the present rules of the Board leave

at issue—namely, whether conscience obliges him to sacrifice all that he, as an advocate of united education, can desire for his own people—to transfer the National fund for education, that powerful engine, into the hands of an hostile Church ; and, in numberless instances, to transfer the children of his own flock to schools in which the Romish Clergy exercise unlimited control, unless he be permitted, within the National School, to force the Bible upon the reluctant consciences of Roman Catholic children.

But all these advantages, it is said, may be, and certainly will be, reversed, in schools where the Roman Catholic priest is patron : and we would not, by our sanction, aid in establishing such. But your sanction does not, and cannot, aid in establishing what is already firmly established. If indeed the National system were an experiment, which your opposition might cause the Government to abandon, you might reasonably feel that your sanction aided in establishing it. This was the ground on which many heretofore refused to avail themselves of its funds, and on which they blamed the Presbyterians ; because that, while the decision of Government was still in suspense, they threw themselves into the scale, and, to secure the management of the system to themselves in the North, transferred it, in a great measure, to the Romish Clergy in the South. But the Government has unequivocally pledged itself to uphold the National system, and that alone ; and you can have no better hopes from any Government which may displace it. The Government permits you to avail yourself of the system, but asks not your sanction, nor heeds your opposition. You might as well speak of establishing by your sanction the ordinances of day and night, because you availed yourself of the light of the one for labour, and the dark-

ness of the other for repose. You can aid in establishing such schools as you disapprove, only by refusing to expend the funds of the Board on such schools as you approve.

The mind were morbidly sensitive indeed, which could feel itself accountable for a shipwreck to which it were in nowise accessary, but on the contrary, used every effort to prevent, merely because it had volunteered to labour in the rescue of the perishing sufferers within its reach. And it were scruple verging towards insanity which could feel itself relieved of this fanciful responsibility by withholding its efforts from the rescue, and leaving all to perish in indiscriminate ruin.

The Christian Examiner states the following serious fact :—

"Some of our readers may not have taken cognizance of the fact that concurrently with the adhesion of the Presbyterian body to the National system, was established a *Presbyterian "Home Mission,"* to extend their principles in the South and West of Ireland; and among other means taken to accomplish this end, they are applying the funds which are *disengaged from their schools in the North*, in consequence of their being able to put their hand into the National purse, to the obtaining possession of the Scriptural schools in the South. We are aware of a case in which a school has been deliberately handed over to the 'Presbyterian Board of Missions,' in consequence of the Clergyman under whose superintendence it had heretofore been, being unable to contribute sufficiently to its support, while the Presbyterians offer 'funds to any amount required.' The introduction of Presbyterian Catechisms follows as matter of course; and thus the National Board is accomplishing indirectly a part of its functions by undermining, with the hand of its Presbyterian supporters, the Established Church in these realms."

This statement furnishes grave matter for consideration. It seems the almost universal opinion that no other educational system than the present can be hoped for. If so, are we to say, with the Christian Examiner, that the National system is to be charged with this new evil,

and not the stern rejection of the National system, now immovably established? Was that Clergyman's zeal according to knowledge—has he done his duty to his country, his flock, his Church, his God, in deliberately handing over his school and children to the "Presbyterian Board of Missions," to be trained in Presbyterianism, rather than place his school under the National Board; support it with the National funds; become its sole patron; exclude all religious teaching except the Bible, and it may be the formularies of the Church—and this, merely because he is not permitted to force the Bible upon children whose parents or guardians object to their receiving it? Were it not wiser in him, and in the Clergy, generally, to establish National Schools under their own patronage, in favourable localities, and like our Presbyterian friends, apply the funds, thus disengaged, in establishing other schools, where the ground for a National School is unfavourable, or has been preoccupied? The Clergy are beginning (and will daily more and more) to moot this question.

When I speak with objectors to the National system, their objection now is, not the principle involved—from this the Government has relieved them by taking upon itself the whole responsibility—but their objection is, the time gone by, the ground preoccupied. This objection, whatever may be its weight, applies only to Romanism, and to the old schools which it has transferred to the National Board, or the new, which it has established under it. Nor is even this ground preoccupied to the extent that men suppose. Very many of the Roman Catholic National Schools are old schools which have been placed by their patrons under the Board. And even here, much might still be done, by establishing additional schools, under Protestant patrons, in favourable localities. But no time

has gone by, no ground is preoccupied, as regards Presbyterianism. The school stated in the Christian Examiner is, one may hope, the only one as yet "deliberately handed over to the Presbyterian Board of Missions." The Scriptural schools of the South and West are still the property of the Church. That ground we still occupy: but the Christian Examiner cannot feel more strongly than I do the little probability of our retaining it, if "the Presbyterians offer funds to any amount required," and we can provide none, but are content "deliberately to hand over our schools to the Presbyterian Board of Missions." Will not men at least seriously consider what principle justifies them in abandoning the ground they occupy, and deliberately handing over their flock to Romanism and Presbyterianism, rather than avail themselves of the National funds, on definite, and, if there is to be common education, fair and reasonable terms.

The Protestant laity have never taken up with interest the view of the question adopted by the Clergy. The Clergy themselves have shewn little practical zeal, if we may, in both cases, judge by the infallible criterion of the subscription list of the Church Education Society. A subscription of £993, making an income from every source of £2096, (for the income of the Diocesan Societies is in a great measure nominal as regards the Church Education Society, and is but a transfer of schools and funds already in existence to the credit of the Society)—£2096, in the fifth year of such a struggle as the present, when placed by the side of the overflowing funds of the Bible, Missionary of every creed, Jewish, Tract, Sunday School, and various other societies, leads me to think that this is not a view of the question in which we shall be carried forward triumphantly by the sympathies of our people. And if now the children of the Church are

deliberately handed over for education to Presbyterian ministers and Roman Catholic priests, because the Established Clergy cannot educate them without public funds, and will not educate them with public funds, unless permitted to force the Bible upon reluctant Roman Catholics, the Protestant laity will be perplexed and alienated. They will be wholly unable to comprehend the meaning of that principle and theoretic zeal which would "honour the Bible" at the cost of our own people, by forcing it into aversion and contempt among others, who, dissenting from our creed and Church, claim the right, which the constitution undoubtedly gives them, of rejecting at our hands all religious instruction. Could any Church maintain its ground—its existence, against the simultaneous attacks of Romanism in the front, and Presbyterianism in the rear; deserted by its own people, and betrayed into the hands of its vigilant and crafty assailants by the fanciful, and contradictory scruples of its professed defenders?

The mysterious but significant allusions to "the time, and place, and objects" of Mr. Woodward's publication, with which Mr. Ross's pamphlet opens, led me to fear that Mr. Woodward's character was in as little repute with Mr. Ross as his "Thoughts on the points at issue." But as I found, after a few pages, that he "fully and freely concedes that Mr. Woodward is one of the most excellent men we have—one whose long and holy walk of life stamps him as a truly good man, and honours him as such with the largest honour of his heart," I gladly admit that I was mistaken in attributing to Mr. Ross, sentiments wholly incompatible with these: and I now bring the two passages into juxta position, only to neutralize with the one, any unfavourable impressions which the superficial reader may have derived from the other.

Mr. Ross tells us that "for the guides and leaders of the Church we want practical men—men personally acquainted with the actual working of those systems about which they would be our counsellors"—"not merely holy men, but men of wisdom also." And he certainly has shewn his practical wisdom in avoiding the disqualification for counselling his brethren with which Mr. Woodward is charged. He has, in this way, qualified himself for offering his very solemn protest, not only against the Church, but against any individual Clergyman, acting under the Board, by making himself "personally acquainted with the actual working of the system;" "giving," he says, "much of my time latterly to a National School—one indeed under very favourable circumstances, being exclusively under a Protestant patron, in which no religious instruction is allowed, but the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in the arrangements of which, I have considerable influence." But lest any should, by this unguarded avowal, be tempted to reject his advice, and follow his example in doing precisely what Mr. Woodward says the advocates of united education may do with a good conscience, he has, throughout his pamphlet, protested that the most imperious obligations of principle forbid—what he is doing—that "the Church cannot connect itself with any system, which would restrain it from a wise and faithful witnessing for the truth, and for Holy Writ"—that there is "a principle interwoven in the very essence of the Church's highest obligations and most sacred duty which stands out against such acquiescence"—a principle of such powerful obligation, that had it not interposed its adamant barrier, nothing could "be more mad as to its temporal interests, more mindless or unreasoning as to its most solemn duties, more regardless of its highest obligations, more

partaking of the narrow views of a party, and less of a grand ordinance for the good and blessing of all, than the refusal of the Church to work out, for the State, an educational scheme, which purports to be for the intellectual and religious instruction of the whole community." He argues, lest the individual should escape, that as "the Church is made up of individuals, that system with which it would be wrong for the Church, as a whole, to connect itself, it would be manifestly wrong for each of its parts, for any individual Clergyman, to connect himself"—and in fine, that the step which Mr. Woodward would induce the Church to take—namely, that step which Mr. Ross himself is taking—is one "by which its own highest duties, and the last hope of the country, would be compromised."

Nor is this National School a matter of necessity, on account of the distance of a Scriptural school, or the unwillingness of the children to attend it. He has "a Church Education School within a mile of the National School, and two thirds of the pupils in it are Roman Catholics, and none have been withdrawn from the one school, in order to place them under the more unconstrained system of the other."

I confess that all this is to me perfectly incomprehensible. I can thoroughly understand Mr. Woodward, notwithstanding the "misty manner" with which Mr. Ross charges him, and the inconsistency with which others have strangely conspired to charge him, when he, who disapproves of united education, and has funds to provide an orthodox Church of England School, declines submitting to the restraints of the National system, and yet sees nothing in that system which should prevent an advocate of united education, on his own avowed principles, from acting under it. But I am wholly at a loss

how to defend Mr. Ross from the charge of inconsistency, in making the most solemn protest, not on the ground of expediency, but on the ground of principle—not merely against the National system, but against “the members of the Church Education Society acting *individually*, and in their several locations, under the rules of the National Board,” and yet volunteering to give much of his time to a National School, within a mile of his Church Education School, and to exercise considerable influence in its arrangements. Indeed he seems to apprehend that he may be suspected of having entangled himself, and thus observes, “It may be said here, that all I have above stated respecting the National School, makes for, not against, Mr. Woodward’s theory. But let us recollect, that this National School is not the National system.” Of course not. Neither would the National School of any of those advocates of united education whom Mr. Woodward recommends, in their extremity, to avail themselves of the National funds, be the National system. But it is to be hoped that it is conducted according to the rules of the system. Otherwise he would justly subject himself to the charge which the Christian Examiner makes against Mr. Trench, “this is indeed a way of getting funds, but we doubt whether it is an honest way.”

Mr. Ross then comes forth as a practical man, “personally acquainted with the actual working of those systems about which” he speaks, and that “for a period of more than thirty years.” And yet, in this long experience, he has failed to discover any difficulty on the part of the Church in providing for the education, not only of the country generally, but of its own children—or if he has, he does not think the difficulty worthy of notice in considering the question, “what part it would be wise in the Clergy, under existing circumstances, to act?”—

nor furnishes the slightest hint how that difficulty is to be removed. Now this, I should have thought, would appear to a "practical man" an essential element of the question. If the Church can find means of establishing such an "orthodox educational system" as the author of "Second Thoughts" approves, it were unwise to submit to the restraints of the National system. If it cannot, and experience has proved that it cannot, then certainly it were deserving of notice by a practical man, whether our children are to be educated, and if so, how we are to find means for educating them. He, no more than any others who have entered into this discussion, entertains the slightest hope from Government. As his objection to the *place* of Mr. Woodward's publication is, that it was published in London, that is, at the publishers of all his other works; so his objection to the *time* is precisely that on which Mr. Woodward grounds his appeal—the fixed determination of the Government. "When (says Mr. Ross) an administration, avowedly Protestant and Conservative in its whole character and structure, and, as such, in its very essence presumed to be the friend of the Church, has taken a more than usually decided attitude in opposition to the mind of the Church, on the great subject of National Education." What then, in such a crisis, are his "Facts and Reasons against" Mr. Woodward's "Thoughts," that his brethren may do even as he. Surely if the boat were rushing towards the rapids, the "man of wisdom," who made his way to the shore by wading through the shallows, or floundering a little in the mire, should point out some other mode of escape, while dissuading his companions from saving themselves by following his example.

He describes the National system in all that relates to its provisions for secular instruction as a model of per-

fection. "A very noble apparatus for secular education, admirable arrangements in the way of order, and a class of books, &c. far superior to any thing with which the country has ever been favoured—the very best class of books. I use them in all the schools with which I have any connexion." "They have provided in every school directly under the Board, opportunities and arrangements, under certain modifications and restrictions, for teaching the Holy Scriptures, and the Protestant formularies."

What then are Mr. Ross's objections to the National system? He objects to the constitution of the Board—that "in our great teaching office, in as far as respects the instruction of the young, we are subject to, and under the control of a Board; which, besides other discordant elements, combines in equal and co-ordinate authority, a Bishop of our Scripture-teaching Church, and a Bishop of the Church, whose grand characteristic it is, that it withholds the Scripture, and forbids its teaching—a strange communion of light and darkness, which pervades the whole system, from the composition of its highest governing power, to the agency of its poorest school."

To this I first answer, that it is the legitimate offspring of the union of two things which he thoroughly approves—united education, and liberty of conscience. I then ask, does the Board control him in the religious instruction of his own children, further than to prevent his doing so at a time and place which they have set apart for other purposes, and when to teach his own would be but an indirect mode of teaching others also? Does this "strange communion of light and darkness pervade the agency of the National School whose arrangements he considerably influences?" Does he feel more "restrained from a wise and faithful witnessing for the truth and for Holy Writ," by which two things, thus separately put, I understand

not only reading the Bible, but also teaching the saving truths of the Bible, by acting under a system defined by Parliament, and published throughout the land, because superintended by a Board of which, to secure united education, a Roman Catholic Bishop is a member, than in "superintending," as he tells us, "some schools upon a most large and Catholic basis, superintended by a Board, in which I have several Roman Catholic priests for my coadjutors in examining all the children quarterly, not only in secular, but in Scriptural acquirements?" Some would feel that *this* Board, and these quarterly examinations, imposed upon them a still more painful restraint in "witnessing for God and the truth," if not for Holy Writ. Others would fear lest this harmony of religious teaching between priest and minister might blind the learner to the errors of the Romish Church, and lead him to believe that not only "the grand characteristic," but the only error of that Church "is, that it withholds the Scripture, and forbids its teaching," and, therefore, that those liberal and enlightened priests who act in such perfect harmony and friendly co-operation with the parish minister in teaching the Scripture, are equally good shepherds of the sheep, and equally safe guides to heaven. But however all this may be, was the Roman Catholic bishop degraded from his "equal and co-ordinate authority at the Board," when the National School was established, to which he "gives much of his time, and whose arrangements he considerably influences?" If not, why may not his brethren, in their urgent need, act precisely as he does?

Mr. Ross objects that by the National system "we are called upon to engage, that we shall not teach, nor persuade in any way to read the word of God, those who may be induced to express reluctance to learn it." This

is an oft refuted mistake. The National system permits us to "teach and persuade to read the word of God," any person, in any way, and any place, except the National School, which, being designed as a theatre of united education, should no more be converted into an arena of controversy than the court house, the work house, or the hospital.

He objects that "we are to engage under this system, to put this farther dishonour on that Holy word, that we shall remove, by our authority, out of the house where it is read, those who may have expressed such reluctance, whether they be willing to remain or not, lest peradventure some sentence of it might come unbidden on their ears—we are thus to be the priests' police, to watch over and to carry into execution their prohibitory laws." I am not sure that I understand this. If it mean that parents and guardians may not withdraw their prohibition, once given, I am convinced it is contrary to fact. If it supposes the case of a parent prohibiting, and a child determining to remain, I know not what the decision of the Board might be, but I should think Mr. Ross's reverence for parental authority would not permit him to consider such an improbable contingency, even though decided in favour of the parent, as furnishing adequate ground for rejecting the system. If it mean that the parents would be willing that their children should read the Scriptures, but for the priests interference—as the parent's submission to his pastor cannot vacate his parental authority, or his child's obligation to obedience, the Board makes no enquiry into the motive of his prohibition, but gives it effect. But, in any view of the passage, there is a mistake in supposing that we are to "remove, by our authority," any who are willing to remain—aye, or any who are unwilling to remain. The rule is simply this—to notify publicly the

hour of religious instruction, and then, not "remove by our authority" any child, willing or unwilling, but only "allow to absent themselves" and "not compel to receive or be present at, any religious instruction to which his parents or guardians object."

What does Mr. Ross mean when he says, "I confess, therefore, that I do not feel Mr. Woodward's sensitiveness, lest 'in the grave matter of reading the Scriptures,' I should perchance induce the people to renounce a little of 'the authority of their pastors.'" Whatever Mr. Woodward may feel, he has expressed no such feeling of sensitiveness. But he thinks Mr. Ross ought to feel it, and all those of whom he thus speaks, "I do for myself, most indignantly repudiate, (as I am sure my brethren who disclaim such an intention could as honestly do) all desire to proselytize Roman Catholic children committed to my care and instruction in these schools:" of Mr. Ross, and of all "popular advocates of compulsory Scripture reading," and at the same time disclaimers of any wish to make proselytes, Mr. Woodward justly asks, "in what position would you leave the great body of our rising population? You would teach them, encourage them, nay bribe them to disobey their present pastors; and, at the same time, covenant and promise, that, as far as you are concerned, they shall not be handed over to any others."

Mr. Ross objects that the National system makes provision for the teaching of error as well as truth. Assuredly it does: and in this country, and these times, could avoid doing so, and at the same time secure united education, only by excluding both truth and error, and making the National education merely secular. This, doubtless, would be far the best arrangement for united education. But the Protestant patron, even as matters

now stand, appears in the National School only as the witness for, and teacher of truth ; and can co-operate in teaching error only by retiring from the field, and leaving such of his flock as may be obliged to enter it unprotected disciples of the teacher of error.

Mr. Ross is content "that the sacred right of parents should be respected," and, hence, that the Bible should be given to those alone whose parents are willing that they should receive it, provided only they are not permitted to leave the school when the Scriptures are being read : and this, not with any intention that they should be auditors, and, in violation of the covenant, catch some stray truth, but merely "that no dishonour should be put upon Holy Writ, by dismissing a portion of the school when it was read, as if it had something questionable in it, or that we admitted it to be a book in some way dangerous or objectionable, such as we would be ashamed or afraid to acknowledge as our guide and hope before all." And are these the "facts and reasons" for opposing the National system, endangering the Church establishment, and abandoning many of the children of the Church to the teaching of Roman Catholic patrons ? Did such apprehensions ever seriously enter any other mind ? Did Mr. Ross, when he wrote thus, recollect having told us that the Church wants, "for her guides and leaders, not merely holy men, but 'men of wisdom' also ?" I confess that such distinctions without a difference, and fears without a cause, gravely advanced, by a really able man, upon a question of such vast importance as that which is now at issue, which involves the education of our young, and perhaps the permanence of that Church establishment which educates our adults for heaven, I confess that such "facts and reasons," far more than Mr. Woodward's "Thoughts on the points at issue," present to my mind

“that haze of fancy, that shadowy veil and soft drapery of sentimentalism, which the imaginative writer takes pains to throw over the exact form and outline” of unsubstantial thoughts, and inconclusive arguments.

Mr. Ross objects that the National system “restrains from a wise and faithful witnessing for the truth, and for Holy Writ.” So did the Kildare-place, and London Hibernian Society, under which he acted. So does the Church Education Society under which he acts. So must every joint Education Society. They permit him, indeed, to force the Bible, but they restrain him from inculcating “*the truth*” upon those unwilling to receive it. But all these objections to the system either do, or they do not, apply to the “National School to which he gives much of his time, and in the arrangements of which he has considerable influence.” Would not his pamphlet be still more “practical” than it is, if, instead of starting abstract difficulties, and improbable contingencies; strange fancies, and idle fears, he taught his brethren his own method of overcoming, or evading them?

Perhaps the “fact” is, that he is not the patron of the National School to which he has “latterly given much of his time.” And the “reason” may be, that the patron is the scape goat, on whose devoted head is laid the whole evil of the National system. If these be the “fact and reason”—for I really know not—and if he gave this explanation of his seeming inconsistency, might not his clerical brethren also find some benevolent Protestant who would offer up himself, as a patron, for the benefit of the lambs of the flock, in any parish where the establishment of a National School was expedient. But although he may not have “put his sign-manual, as a patron, to the rules and regulations of the Board,” surely he feels himself bound in conscience not to violate those

rules, in the "arrangements which he influences." "No Clergyman," he tells us, "can get authority from the Board to make arrangements for the religious teaching in a school, and to take his part in that religious teaching, without becoming connected with the Board as a patron, without putting his sign-manual to the rules and regulations of the Board, acknowledging thus, that their law is holy, just, and true, that it does not in any way violate his conscience, without becoming subject, in his teaching office, to the control of a Roman Catholic Archbishop, and thus being made an integral part, a consenting and an acting member of this great educational corporation." This were serious indeed. This authority to probe conscience would constitute the National Board an embryo inquisition; and might well justify the fear of the author of "Second Thoughts," that "if we admit the right of her Majesty's political advisers to enter our schools, we shall have nothing to say against their entering our pulpits likewise"—"and be only free to preach whatever politics were uppermost at the time." But I do not myself conceive that the sign-manual of a patron implies any of these things, except his pledge, which may or may not be complacential, to submit to such rules and regulations of the Board as affect himself. But has Mr. Ross put this "sign-manual to the rules and regulations of the Board?" If not, is "the religious teaching of the school" not among "the arrangements which he influences?" And is that school, "to which he gives much of his time," as far as Mr. Ross is concerned, such as Mr. Woodward suggests as the best for joint education, where "the instruction is purely secular, without any attempt at religious teaching. Reading, writing, arithmetic, taught, just as shoemaking or gardening might be, without any reference to spiritual concerns?" If so, I can readily understand

why he considers Mr. Woodward's objections, even to this, to be stated "in his own peculiar and misty manner," though he declines to enter into their demerits, and though they certainly have struck others as perfectly intelligible and just. The very first of them—"the argument drawn from the danger to a minority of Protestants being merged in schools containing masses of Roman Catholics," the *Christian Examiner* for July tells us, "is that which has been adopted by the advocates of the Church Education Society. The Bishop of Cashel pleaded on that ground, at the meeting of the London Hibernian Society, for funds to support the Church Education Society's Schools."

Mr. Ross complains that the scheme has been arranged "without in any way consulting the mind, the duty, or the conscience of the Church concerning it." As matters stand, this, surely, only increases the liberty of the Church as regards it. For if the Church be no party to its establishment it is no sharer in the responsibility, and is accountable for those acts only which itself performs.

But what avails it to the cause of truth, thus to dwell upon the inconsistency of Mr. Ross's attention to a National School, and his solemn protest, not only against the Church, but against the individual touching the system? It puts those upon their guard whom it may materially concern. It shews them that "a practical man" can discover a clue through the labyrinth of mere theory which would entangle them. It may lead men to pause and consider, who may have to choose "between a National School under very favourable circumstances, exclusively under a Protestant patron, in which no religious instruction is allowed but the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and it may be the formularies of their own Church," and deliberately handing over their school to

the Presbyterian Board of Missions," to be trained to Presbyterianism : or, in default of this, transferring their children to a National School under the absolute dominion of a Romish priest to be trained to Romanism.

There is one important fact on which Mr. Woodward and Mr. Ross are pointedly at issue—the willingness of parents—and, as Mr. Ross states, in many instances, of priests also—that their children should read the Scriptures, and attend Scriptural schools, "I felt happy," says Mr. Ross, "when I could acquit myself of one particular in my ministerial duty, towards the Roman Catholics, by taking the charge and oversight of the education of their children. On this point I can see by the pamphlet that I have no community of feeling with Mr. Woodward." But why does he assume, in direct contradiction to Mr. Woodward's assertions, that the charge and oversight of their children's education would be committed to him by Roman Catholic parents ; and if it were, that Mr. Woodward would decline it ? Mr. Ross recognises, as every man must do, the law of necessity ; and because, as he tells us, "in consequence of the unhappy circumstances of the country, as to its religious condition, the Church is shut out from its ordinance ministrations, and to a large extent from its preaching office, with respect to the great body of the people," he submits to Providence, as indeed he must, and neither forces the ordinances, nor the preaching of the Church, upon those who sternly refuse them. And would he not think it most unfair in a Scotch or English Clergyman, who had free access in both these particulars to his Church going and Bible reading people, to taunt him with his sectarian and uncatholic feelings, in withholding from any, those important offices of his ministry. But *he* has, as he tells us, free access to the young—children never—

parents never—priests seldom, and generally unsuccessfully, reject the Scriptural school. “Among,” he says, all the various systems for Scriptural schools I have never found any difficulty from the parents. I have never found any difficulty from the children, and only occasionally from the Clergy, a difficulty in general soon giving way, from the unpopularity of the opposition, the manifest feeling of the parents and children against it.”

If such be the case, I have no hesitation in admitting, that he is as responsible for the Scriptural education of the Roman Catholic, as of the Protestant children of his parish. But not to speak of the North of Ireland generally, beyond the locality which he thus describes, such, assuredly, is not the state of the South. No person is more acquainted than I am with the district from which Mr. Woodward writes, and with his experience in it as a minister, having had the privilege of labouring in it, as his curate, for nineteen years; and I can testify to a state of feeling, with regard to Scripture, and Scriptural schools, far different from that which Mr. Ross describes. I have seen, indeed, Roman Catholics appealing to him “respecting their poor, respecting their sick”—and their appeal met with lavish generosity—for so I must call it, as though charity, shut up from every other vent, would pour its full current through the only channel left open to it. But I have never heard them “enquiring about schools and books, for their children.” I have never seen “masters of schools, or deputations of children, applying for Testaments.” I have never seen “priests friendly to our Scriptural schools.” Roman Catholics will sometimes be permitted, from secular motives, to attend a Scriptural school, not *because* it is Scriptural, but notwithstanding its being Scriptural, to please a landlord or benefactor—to secure the advantage of a free, a convenient,

or a superior school : but “ where the choice is really and *bonâ fide* given, where there is no worldly interest to serve, or secular bribe to tempt, I believe” with Mr. Woodward, “ a comparatively small number of the Romanists of this country would wish their children to read the Scriptures—that is, unless their priests desired it.” The Roman Catholic parents have never read the Bible themselves, and cannot therefore value it for their children. Our efforts to press Scripture reading, and the priests to repress it, have associated the Bible with Protestantism ; and this association has led them to dread and to dislike it. But, if their pastor recommended the Bible, they would freely receive it, just as we should, without hesitation, receive the most powerful and dreaded medicine, on the prescription of the physician in whom we confided.

It is clear that if two persons contemplate two different objects—or even the same object in different aspects, their descriptions cannot harmonize. If two persons view a piece of tapestry, or a mountain, from opposite sides, their reports may both be true, but must be contradictory. In contemplating the Roman Catholic population, Mr. Ross looks North, Mr. Woodward South. I am well aware that the Roman Catholics of the North possess a vast superiority over the Roman Catholics of the South, arising, I believe, not wholly, as Mr. Ross assumes, from Scriptural schools, but, in a great degree, from the tonic regimen of a more copious admixture of Protestants. God forbid that I should wish to detract from the value and efficacy of Scripture, but I conceive that he has not here accurately distinguished between causes and effects, and, hence, lays more weight than it can bear on the argument in favour of Scriptural schools drawn from the “very favourable, and somewhat unusual specimen of the tone

of Roman Catholic feeling and intelligence" in his own locality. This he considers as proving "the ameliorating and improving influence both in a religious, and in an intellectual point of view, of the persevered in working, for a long season, of Scriptural schools in a particular neighbourhood." There can be no doubt of such an effect resulting from Scriptural instruction received and valued as Mr. Ross describes. But each member of that quotation is, I conceive, a cause, and an effect, of the other. The "sense of obligation, of duty, and of responsibility to some higher authority," in the children of those schools where the Scriptures are read—and the "fearless self-will and proud independency" of the children in those schools where the Scriptures are not read, are as often the cause, as the consequence, of the one receiving, and the other rejecting the Bible.

I can scarcely hope that Mr. Ross's interesting description of his own locality applies, generally, even to the North—certainly not to the South. If it does, it furnishes the most powerful argument in favour of Mr. Woodward's appeal. If the people be willing that their children should read the Scriptures, the point is carried. The last appeal is to them. They, with a word, can convert the National Schools into Scriptural schools.

There are two points on which Mr. Ross declares himself "in strong sympathy with the feelings of Mr. Woodward, as expressed in his pamphlet." The one, his "respect for parental authority." The other, "where he, by implication, condemns those who would seem to argue, that 'the Roman Catholic religion is a system of unmingled evil.'" Nor does Mr. Ross declare only, but proves, his sympathy, by the manly and independent tone of thought, the depth of charitable and devout feeling, and the chaste eloquence, with which he depicts these topics

in which he sympathises with Mr. Woodward, and strongly dissents from all Mr. Woodward's opponents.

A jealousy is sometimes entertained even by good men when the life of God in the soul is emphatically dwelt upon, and when, perhaps, to still "the din of controversial strife, and theological hatred," to correct a proud and pugnacious spirit, and prevent men from resting in "knowledge which puffeth up," without "following after charity which edifieth," the doctrines and the graces of Christianity are placed in their proper order, and relative importance, the former as the great mean, the latter as the great end. When that "peace of God," which the pursuit of holiness, as the great end, never fails to secure, is broken in upon by the clamours of angry controversy, it becomes needful to re-adjust the disturbed order and proportions of divine truth, to remind angry disputers about the "faith once delivered to the saints," that in quarrelling about the means, they have lost the end, and, in "rightly dividing the word of truth," while we urge upon the self-justifying moralist, not only as a great and essential, but as "the *present* truth," that "by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast," to demand, with the Apostle, of deluded antinomianism or dead orthodoxy, "can faith save thee?" I am convinced that, in the case of really pious men, this jealousy results from their not keeping before the mind, constantly and clearly, the vital and essential distinction between holiness, and what is popularly styled morality. The latter has been often used as a breast work from behind which latitudinarianism and infidelity have levelled their most envenomed darts, not only against Christian faith, but against Godliness: the former tends only to that heaven whence it originally descended, and which it has already brought

down into the soul. It unites that soul still more closely, in faith and love, to the Saviour, of whose spirit alone it could be the efflux and offspring.

The author of "Second Thoughts" complains of the latter part of Mr. Woodward's pamphlet as speaking of "the unimportance of theological differences provided persons possess the fruits of a good life." He complains of the danger of "blinding good men's eyes by specious words on the subject of a good life, as being of more importance than a correct faith"—of Mr. Woodward's "implied (I might say expressed) *comparison* between theological correctness and moral worth"—and in certain cases of "his not hesitating to say that we should not be 'over exquisite' to enquire into shades of doctrine." In these "Second Thoughts"—"theological differences"—"correct faith"—"theological correctness"—"shades of doctrine"—these expressions amply represent all that Mr. Woodward has expressed or implied upon the one side, while surely it will be admitted that a "good life" and "moral worth" is an inadequate transcript indeed of that glowing picture, full of life, fervour, and unction, in which "the new man created in Christ Jesus," "animated by that life which is hid with Christ in God," "living in vital union with the Triune God," is made visible to us in the pages on which he comments—"the graces of humility, purity, and love, adorning the life, and beautifying the conversation," "lucid proof given that the heart of stone had become the heart of flesh, that the same mind that was in Christ Jesus filled the soul, and the power of God's peaceful Spirit calmed the bosom." Surely this is the great end, and, if attained, God's appointed means cannot have been wanting, "though we may not be able to discern a root beneath the surface exactly squaring with what we have settled as the standard of faith." Surely if this be what

we are to understand by "moral worth" and a "good life," it is, if we must compare the means and the end, of greater importance than "theological correctness," "shades of doctrine," and "a correct faith," which we might share with devils, and perish. Do men, as they look abroad, believe that there are "sincerely religious men of all denominations" within what they themselves acknowledge to be the enclosures of the Christian Church? Do they believe that no "points in dispute between the different sections of the Christian Church can come into comparison with loving the Lord their God with all their heart, and their neighbour as themselves?" Do they believe that Roman Catholics "err much, nay in what some would call fundamental doctrine," and yet that Roman Catholics may be saved?—"that Roman Catholics may be good men, and train up their children in virtuous living and substantial piety?"—"that it were better to possess the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and to feel the soft repose, the peaceful calm, the blessed Sabbath, the opening heaven of love to God and man, than to understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and to be devoid of that charity, without which all our doctrines, and all our doings are nothing worth?" If men believe all this—and who but a bigot and a formalist denies it?—why should they view with suspicion, and brand with the stigma of latitudinarianism and infidelity, those, who, to promote the interests of peace and godliness, do not shrink from expressing it.

With the protest issued by certain Clergymen of the dioceses of Cashel and Emly I scarcely know how to deal. It contains no expression of opinion, on the part of the subscribers, respecting Mr. Woodward's views on the subject of education, or the comparative merits of the Church Education Society and National system. Into

these matters it does not enter, but merely disavows "charges and surmises" supposed to be contained in the following passage :—

"Since my attention was attracted to this subject, I have conversed on it with not a few of my clerical friends, whom I had taken it for granted were unfriendly to the National system. They were indeed practically of that number, as they had passively fallen into the ranks of those who refuse to co-operate with the Board. But were I to take them as a sample of the general body of its clerical opponents, and I believe they are a fair one, I should come to the following conclusion :—that were the Clergy examined, one by one, it would be found that the great majority have thought very little on the subject for themselves, and have followed the lead of a few who have been used to dictate in such matters. Many, I believe, are in their hearts inclined to give in their adhesion, but are afraid of appearing to desert their party. In short, I am convinced, that if certain names were enrolled on the side of the National Board, the main body of the Clergy would decide in its favour ; that is, I mean, so far as to express their willingness, now that it is established, to act under it. I suspect, indeed, that a movement in that direction has practically commenced. But it has been somewhat subterraneous ; for many are still afraid to speak their sentiments aloud."

As the subscribers have not stated the precise grounds of their objection to this passage, I can only assume that they understand it, with Mr. Ryland—though the very next sentence in Mr. Woodward's pamphlet, as well as the whole tenor of it, contradicts such an interpretation—as conveying a "charge and surmise" that the great body of the Clergy are "led by a few great names" and "are already worming their way into the sewers of patronage."

I cannot, however, but express my surprise, that any persons who would be unwilling to prejudice an important subject by a side blow, who calmly read the very next sentence—"It was the apprehension that the supposed threat of withholding patronage, might, from the causes explained before, check still farther the open avowal of those feelings which induced me to take my pen thus hastily in hand"—who referred to "the causes explained before," (p. 6.) "Indeed, I fear this *imagined* threat (for I trust and believe it is no other) may operate altogether in an opposite way. It may prevent some from giving that free and unbiassed consideration to the subject which the time demands. In the first place, their judgment may be warped by a certain jealousy of themselves; for it is the rule of many conscientious men (and would it not be the safest rule for all?) in doubtful and delicate cases, to lean invariably towards the side which makes against their private interests or selfish wishes. And besides, they may dread the suspicions which any apparent change of view, at such a moment, might naturally create, that they were acting on mean and temporising motives"—and, especially, who read the account which Mr. Woodward candidly gives of his own previous quiescence, could imagine that in that passage he meant any thing which could be offensive to those of whom he there speaks. I cannot imagine how they could conceive him to be so silly, not to say unprincipled, as to recommend a certain line of conduct, and state, at the same time, that those who adopted it, proved themselves thereby foolish and dishonest—foolish, in acting as the passive tools of others; dishonest, in acting thus with a base view to patronage. No. There is a legitimate influence which, in every well ordered society, is, and ought to be, conceded to station, wisdom, experience, zeal; and without which

no social compact can possess the strength and dignity which result from wise and harmonious movement. Every member is not the head, or heart, or hands of the body politic, but every member has his place and office. And often, when the head judges wrongly, and the eye sees through a distorting medium, they are compelled, by the interest in the common weal of other, and often less honourable members, to pause and reconsider. The more prominent agents often feel embarrassed by a desire to maintain their "consistency," and hence are slow in recognising those providential obstacles which should check, or divert them from their course. And it is precisely at these points of interruption that those arouse themselves and reconsider, who, agreeing with these leaders in essential principles, and in the main object, had, from various causes, left to them the practical working out of that object. They are not the most servile, but the wisest men, who feel disinclined, by rash and isolated movement, at the impulse of scruple or self-will, to break the unity of the body, and forfeit the respect and power which attend combined and harmonious action. They seek rather that their views and feelings should be diffused, and thus tell upon those who have been accustomed, and are best qualified to lead. Hence there is an honest feeling of reluctance at appearing to desert party; because, if rashly done, without adequate cause, and without first using every proper means of securing practical attention to that cause, it is a social suicide, a stab at the vitals of society, and, in religious matters, partakes of the character of schism.

The present is a crisis of the kind to which I alluded. The question of education presses intensely and practically upon the Clergy. An insurmountable barrier stands in their direct course, the fund for education on which the

Church heretofore relied, has been withdrawn by Government, and with a declaration which none, in these days, can doubt, that it will not be restored. The Protestant laity, from whatever cause, and there are many, have not responded to the appeal that they should come forward, and combine with the Clergy to supply its place. The Clergy feel that this is not a question of mere abstract theory, which they may discuss at leisure, shut themselves up in their studies, "meditate and be still," but one of the most vital and urgent practical importance, which meets them abroad in their parishes at every step they take, and in every pastoral visit: in fact that something must be done, and done immediately, unless they are willing to hand over their children for education to the Romish Clergy. But what that something is to be they certainly have not yet determined. The plans are at least as many as the pamphlets. Government might say to them, if the allusion may be made without irreverence, "If two of you shall agree as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them." Of course, until they see their way more clearly, whether by a more cordial regimen to cherish into life their torpid Church Education Society; or to adopt some one of the several schemes proposed by the several writers; or to avail themselves, as Mr. Woodward thinks they may, of the National fund; they are quite right in not committing themselves to his views. But if it be permitted me, as a Clergyman of some standing in the diocese from which it emanates, to protest against their protest, I cannot but say that it has not, as I conceive, attained its professed object of self-defence, as the law prescribes, by the least offensive weapons. In the first place, three of the dignitaries who issued the original circular appear as volunteers. There is no allusion to the Education question to compel

them forward ; and the Dean of Cashel, the Archdeacon of Cashel, and the Archdeacon of Emly, were as effectually protected by non-residence from the possibility of any shaft of allusion reaching them, as the Clergy of any other diocese. Some, though resident, were at such a distance as never to meet Mr. Woodward, a constant resident in his own parish, and could not therefore be amongst those with whom he conversed. Some, even if they did not consider that they would more probably be ranked amongst the leaders than the led, might have hoped that they were amongst those of whom Mr. Woodward speaks in his preface, " I felt indescribable pain at the idea, that many whom I respect and love, and whose friendship I value as one of the most cheering circumstances of my life, may be alienated by my thus putting forward sentiments and principles so contrary to what I know to be their long cherished habits of thinking, feeling, and acting." Others again may have felt personal affection, or personal obligation, to Mr. Woodward, and would therefore, doubtless, have gladly hailed a mode of procedure, had any been suggested, which would have shielded them from the "charges and surmises" with the least disrespect to him. And if some published document were deemed needful, a disavowal of any offensive meaning, if asked and obtained from Mr. Woodward, or a simple resolution of continued attachment to the Church Education Society, and continued opposition to the National system, if all the subscribers to the present document could have signed that, and especially if backed by such a subscription as would bring credit to the diocese, and give "strength to bring forth" to the heretofore abortive throes of its Church Education Society, would as effectually guard the most morbid sensitiveness to opinion from "the charges and surmises" condensed into that brief but fearful extract,

as the publication of a document which does not even hazard an opinion on "the points at issue" would rebut the charge that the Clergy had "thought little for themselves on the subject,"—or following in the wake of an array of dignitaries, without a single argument to rally, or lead them on, would rebut the charge of being led by "great names,"—or reproving the advocate of a system disapproved of by the whole episcopal bench, with a solitary exception, and that not of their own Diocesan, would rebut the charge, as interpreted by Mr. Ryland, that they were "worming their way into the sewers of patronage." I firmly believe that Mr. Woodward intended no such charge. For myself, I beg to be distinctly understood as making or insinuating no charge against my clerical brethren, except it be the venial charge of having adopted a very Irish mode of attaining their object.

Such vague and irregular documents, privately and hastily got up, without previous notice, are very objectionable, because very dangerous weapons. They put it in the power of a few to commit a whole diocese—not merely those who sign, but those also who do not sign, to many things against which both would protest. I miss from the subscribers to that document, Clergymen of the diocese, whose character for piety, for principle, for discretion, is not inferior to that of any who have signed it. I doubt not that some of these may feel uncomfortably circumstanced: that, with them, to sign, or not to sign, was but a choice of difficulties, to which they feel little pleased that its originators should have subjected them. Some of these may continue to disapprove of any connexion with the National system, but be convinced that Mr. Woodward meant no insult to his brethren. These would have been glad to sign a resolution simply affirming their continued disapproval of the National system;

and as this would have perfectly attained their object, they may feel that it were unjustifiable to volunteer a gratuitous public act of disrespect towards a Clergyman of high and well merited reputation. Of those who have signed, some may, notwithstanding, have their doubts as to the wisdom of their present position with regard to the National system, but have signed as a protection against the charge of unworthy motive which, if they held back when such a document called them to disavow it, they may fear would be imputed to them. These would have been perfectly satisfied by a disclaimer on Mr. Woodward's part of any such imputation. Some had yet seen of the pamphlet but the garbled extracts unfairly commented upon by the public prints; and the isolated passage contained in the circular, separated from its explanatory context. But they must determine "*without delay*," for such, and so underlined, was the urgent demand of the circular. They could decide but on the partial materials before them, and signed. In fact, the most capacious net has been cast into the diocese, and has "gathered (as far as regards opinion) of every kind"—though considerably less than half the beneficed Clergy of the diocese. But I am convinced that if that circular, instead of deciding for the Clergy what they must do—or do nothing, while others were calling attention to them—if, instead of demanding instant and unqualified subscription, or instant refusal of subscription, to a document which they should themselves have been invited to originate, it had called a meeting to consider the subject, and given each an opportunity of stating his particular views, either that document would never have appeared, or appeared shorn of the better part even of its present names.

I do, then, on public grounds, protest against this

document, got up in the manner, and at the moment it was, which appears to me a greater affront to the Clergy (assembled as they were at the visitation—actually present within view of the place where this document was prepared, but not thought worthy of being consulted upon a matter affecting their own feelings and opinions) than any thing which can be fairly extracted from Mr. Woodward's pamphlet. This document acts upon the very principle which it is mainly published to deny. It practically treats the Clergy as if they were to be led, not by consultation, argument, and conviction, but by what Mr. Ryland styles, "great names."

Men may be pleased to risk their own names in collision with that of one "whose praise is in the Churches;" nearly the father of his diocese in standing; one of the few bright lights that at the commencement of the present century rose upon the darkness of the Church, and whose untiring and unclouded course, from the morning to the evening of his day, has shed upon many, the light, and warmth, and blessings of the Gospel—many who, in time and in eternity, will arise, and call him blessed—whose labours of love are written in the book of God's remembrance, and have won for him that universal testimony which, distinctly heard even through the passing clamours of party, proclaims him a faithful and devoted, a highly gifted, and "an able minister of the New Testament." Men may, if they deem it so befits them, rush *en masse*, and without note of preparation, on such; but I do solemnly protest, in the name, and for the security of the diocese, against any set of men constituting themselves the managers of its affairs, and the guardians of its honour: excluding from their council, while committing, by their acts, the Clergy assembled at visitation around the very walls within which they deliberated; whom they

might have summoned, at the moment, personally, to their consultation; or, better still, have invited by a circular, issued a few days previously, to meet at the visitation for considering this grave matter—a matter involving, however it may be denied, disrespect towards such a man—venerable for piety, for talent, for years, for high character; refusing to Mr. Woodward, or his friends, who were present, but in utter ignorance of the design, an opportunity of explaining what might have given offence; refusing to the assembled diocese, kept in the same ignorance, an opportunity of stating what their views of that extract were, and in what view, if needful, they would protest against it, or whether a simple resolution of disapproval of the National system would not be more effectual, more respectful to Mr. Woodward, more dignified for them, than to volunteer assuming that a charge of baseness, which it was needful to repel, was made upon them by a most respected minister of their diocese. I do protest against this heart of the diocese, surrounded by the Clergy, yet separated from them, originating hastily, privately, without notice; and sending after the Clergy through every vein of the diocese for signature “*without delay*,” a printed circular so vague, so undefined, so urgent, which they could not keep back from publication, and yet gave them no time for mutual consultation; and which committed every Clergyman in the diocese either to subscribe, or to submit to, the infinite variety of constructions, which he, or any individual of the public, might be able to find, or to put, upon a passage, dragged into microscopic view, for an analysis of every shade of meaning or feeling, every “charge and surmise” which might be extracted from it. That circular, through these large dioceses, added the names of but *seven* beneficed Clergymen to the original subscribers! I confess to my great surprise, considering all the circum-

stances under which it was got up. How far the hurry of this extemporaneous movement may have affected the judgment of the original subscribers, and increased the original subscription, I can of course only conjecture. But when I consider that the original subscribers were not a selection from the diocese, men met together to ease their minds, by mutual consultation, of a burden which oppressed them, but many of them accidentally present when the obnoxious passage was extemporaneously introduced ; and when I contrast their full signature, in the hurry of the moment, and with lesser motive, (for the circular was not yet published) with the scant subscription of *seven* beneficed Clergymen, collected in its public circuit through the two dioceses of Cashel and Emly, I cannot but feel convinced, that had that passage been submitted, as it should have been, to the Clergy assembled on the spot where the circular was prepared—and, still more, had they been previously invited to consider it, the diversity of judgment, as regarded the passage, and, I trust I may add, the harmony of feeling as regarded the writer, would have dispersed the subscribers.

In all I have said upon this subject, which I strongly feel, I have not desired to express, nor do I entertain, any disrespect towards the subscribers ; on the contrary, towards some of them I ever have felt, and still do feel, sincere affection and respect. I trust such will give me the benefit of this confession.

There is another protest which I think but fair to Mr. Woodward, that this pamphlet has been written without concert or consultation with him, and is not to be treated as an exponent of his views and feelings. This will of course appear to some very needless. But as most of those who know me, know also the close intercourse with Mr. Woodward which it has been my privilege to enjoy,

during a ministerial connexion of nearly twenty years, and which I gratefully acknowledge as the chief blessing and happiness of my life, I felt that I ought not to review this controversy, without qualifying myself for such a protest, and therefore carefully abstained from making myself acquainted, directly or indirectly, with his opinions, or feelings, as regard the pamphlets, or Clergy protest. In this pamphlet, I can honestly say, I deal with Mr. Woodward's views and feelings as if I had never seen him but in print.

For myself, I too must of course bear the charge of "inconsistency." My schools are not under the National Board, but the Incorporated Society—munificent patrons—who have hailed with gladness, and more than met, every effort which I have made for the advancement of education in my parish, of whatever kind, religious or secular, and for whatever class, high or humble. Every child who attends, and is able, reads the Scriptures. But I have found here, as elsewhere, that in the alternate ebb and flow of Roman Catholic children, which more embarrasses the free action of the schools, than the schools, I fear, under such circumstances, can benefit them, my schools are rather training, than finishing schools: and though my master and mistress are freely acknowledged to be superior to any in the neighbourhood, few remain who can read the Scriptures with intelligence. They stay, for the secular advantages of the schools, while, as the parents think, we can do their religion no harm. I have been, from its commencement, a member of the Church Education Society. I have been one of the Secretaries of its Cashel Diocesan branch, and a member of its committee. My own schools I have opened to its examiners. Their funds form by far the largest item in its report; and, with those of my respected friend Mr.

Woodward's ; (the next in amount) are nearly one fourth of the whole subscription for its schools in the two dioceses of Cashel and Emly. I have advocated its claims from strange pulpits. I urged on a meeting of the two dioceses, at the visitation of last year, the importance, if we stood aloof from the National system, of making a vigorous effort ourselves ; and to it, if made with energy, I offered fifty pounds on my own part, in the hope that our zeal might tell upon the laity, not yet sufficiently interested to subscribe a single guinea to our languishing Diocesan fund. That suggestion, as I have already said, was practically rejected.

Are not these "facts and reasons" to justify Mr. Woodward, and, when men would silence him, myself, in looking abroad from our "peaceful hiding places" on the destitution of our Zion, and imploring our clerical brethren, while philosophizing upon the theory of education, and protesting for the right of educating in the Bible the children of Roman Catholics, to consider, and say, how the children of the Church are to be educated.

Until the Clergy will consent to open their eyes to the fact of the real bearing, if any, of this question upon patronage, I too can scarcely "escape being suspected by a suspicious world of worming my way into the sewers of patronage." I have never sought patronage. When in a very different position from my present as to clerical income, I declined valuable patronage. I occupy a post inferior to but one in the diocese—Mr. Woodward's—in combined interest and income. In it I am, and well may be, content to close my ministry.

To this post I was appointed by the late Bishop of Cashel, a sincere advocate of the National system, after a correspondence—and I record it with double pleasure as a grateful tribute to his amiable condescension and

liberality—in which he fully stated his views of the National system, I mine. My last letter contained a distinct and unequivocal declaration that I could not co-operate with the National Board. For some time I heard no more—and thought I should hear no more. His next letter contained, not the slightest allusion to our previous correspondence, but a most kind and unqualified offer of the preferment I now hold.

If I have written with undue warmth, or harshness, I sincerely regret it. This has been my first essay at controversy, I sincerely hope it may be my last, and experience has not taught me such address, in the use of this double edged and pointed weapon, as would disarm an antagonist without even the appearance of desiring to inflict a wound.

The bulk of this pamphlet demands an apology. It arises from the successive appearance, during its progress, of the pamphlets which it reviews; and which compelled me to consider them separately, instead of generalizing their matter, and comprehending them in a single review. The tide of publication has now turned. Since the former sheets of this review have gone through the press, two pamphlets have appeared, both, as I learn, affirming in substance Mr. Woodward's views. Mr. Knox's I have not yet seen—Dr. Martin's, too late to avail myself of more than this reference to the high authority of his name. It has been to me, however, very cheering, to meet again, after the lapse of many years, on this as yet unpopular and unbeaten path, one whose intellectual powers I had, in my earlier days, learned to highly appreciate, when we sat together at lecture in the chambers of our kind and attentive college tutor, Dr. Wall, and side by side, during all the examinations of its undergraduate course, in the theatre of our university.

With all respect for the independence of thought and action which every minister of our Church may justly claim ; and without the slightest intention of adopting the charge imagined by Mr. Ryland, that “ the body of the Clergy are led by great names,” but merely asserting “ the legitimate influence in every well ordered society, of station, wisdom, experience, zeal,” I conceive that such men as my respected friends, Mr. Woodward and Dr. Martin, for both I trust will permit me so to call them, may fairly ask that the Clergy will pause to listen to their “ strong reasons”—will, if it must be so, “ strike, but hear,” while they implore them to suspend the blow which would immolate the lambs of the flock upon the altars of Romanism and Presbyterianism.

Mr. Woodward’s pamphlet, which reopened this controversy—perhaps the most important in its practical bearings which has for many years occupied the Church—cannot, I am convinced, pass away without some effect. If there be life in the patient, this refrigerating application will stimulate into action our fainting Church Education Society : and then, the cordial regimen which the Dean of Leighlin, with his wonted munificence in such works of charity, has proposed to aid in ministering, will, if generously supplied, quickly nourish her into health and vigour. If not, the sooner those who need avail themselves of the ample resources of the National Board, and cease “ deliberately to hand over” our schools and children to the “ Presbyterian Board of Missions,” or to the Propaganda of Rome, the better for our country—our Church—and our children.

THE END.





